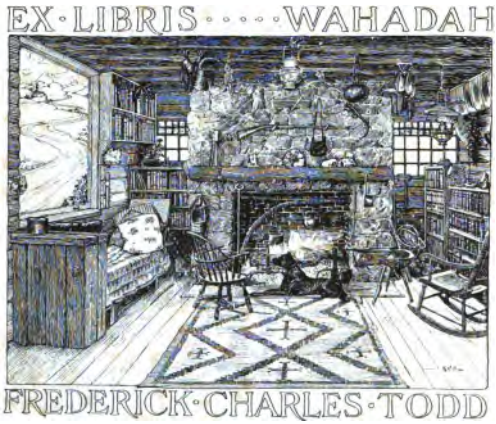

LO-TO-KAH.

"I sped away over the brown sands in pursuit of the woman."

LO-TO-KAH

BY
VERNER Z. REED

ILLUSTRATED BY
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CONTENTS.

TO

CLARENCE CLARK HAMLIN.

PREFACE.

THE six tales that make up this little book were composed hastily, and at long intervals, and all of them were written in the scant leisure that falls to the lot of a busy man of business. This may, in part, account for their imperfections.

The supernatural is taken into account, to a great extent, because it is taken into account in the lives of the Indians. I hope to have the leisure and good fortune, at a later time, to study and treat fully of the religion of the Ute Indians, but for the purpose of explaining the mystical references in these stories, it will suffice to say that some of the Utes believe in the re-incarnation of the soul, in the power to send the spirit (they do not know the term "Astral body") away from the physical body, and in the possibility of holding communion with the spirits of the dead. However, I have not attempted to confine myself to their literal beliefs.

These stories are published in the hope that they will serve to amuse the limited number of people who may read them. If they serve no other purpose than to introduce the pictures of L. Maynard Dixon and Charles Craig in new fields, the writer believes that they will not have been published in vain.

LO-TO-KAH THE UNCIVILIZED.

I HAD known old Lo-To-Kah a month. During that time the old man had "made medicine" over me, and discovered that, according to Indian ideas, it was safe to trust me as a friend. We had ridden over the mesas and plains, had eaten together, had exchanged presents, and had become better acquainted than most men do in a year.

One day we had ridden about twenty miles to see an old Indian who was dying of pneumonia. On the return journey we stopped under a clump of piñons, ate a lunch of jerked beef, and after eating were lolling back on a blanket that the old man had unstrapped from his saddle. While we were lazily smoking

and looking up at the blue Colorado sky, my companion became more communicative than was usual for him. He told me of the Ute belief in Chah-now-woof, the Great Spirit, and he explained in detail the mysteries and ceremonies of one of the dances of his people. He recounted various adventures he had met with while journeying to the dances and festivals of the tribes who dwelt in various parts of the Southwest, all of whom he had visited. I then asked him to tell me an old-time tale of his people, and the tale he told me is written here in his own words:—

I could tell you many tales of the things that have been in the thirty years since I first learned the English speech, or I could tell you many tales of the things that have been in the more than fifty years since I first learned the Spanish speech from the Mexican people; but I will tell you instead of these, a tale of a time long ago, when I could speak no speech but that of my own people and of the people of the Navajos. It is a tale of many words, and it takes me far back into the time of the past—the time when the white-skinned people had not yet driven the Indians from the lands that were given them by the Great Spirit. And when I have

told you, then you will know a stranger tale than is known in the city where you dwell. For I have been among the people of your race, and they know no tales but those of winning gold, or of weak love that would faint and cry out at the sight of blood.

When I was a young man, I was a mighty hunter, and in the wars with the enemies of my tribe I was the bravest of all the young warriors. I could shoot an arrow straighter than an eagle can fly; I could throw a stone with as much force as your gun can speed a bullet, and no arm was stronger than mine in wielding the stone-shod battle-clubs of my people. I know not how I came to be so strong and so mighty among men; for my father was but a weak man, who was so little liked that he was called the woman-man. Because my father was despised, I too was despised when a boy. But strength is respected among people like mine, and while I was yet a youth it came to be said that I was not my father's son, for with single blows I almost broke the heads of those who cast their gibes upon me. I am old now and my face is wrinkled, and I seem not to have the strength of a child, but there were times in the past when I fought such fights as the white

men never know. And there was a time, too, when the fairest woman that ever lived lay in my arms—and that was worth more to me than all the battles I ever won.

I was twenty-two years old when the chief of my tribe called me to his wickeup and told me he had chosen me to go to the land of the Navajos to arrange for a great spirit-dance that the two tribes were to celebrate together. It was a great honor for so young a man as I, and I went forth with my heart full of gladness. I liked the Navajos but little; I knew them to be as false as snakes and that they would kill men whose backs were turned, but our tribes were then at peace, and I knew too that the fame of my courage had gone forth even as far as their land, so I set out alone and was not afraid. It was ten days' ride to the land of the Navajos —ten weary days, across dead plains, brown mesas and dry *arroyos*—and in those ten long days I did not meet a man of any tribe.

The chief of the Navajos was kind in his greeting to me; he accepted the presents I bore to him, and he told me of presents of belts and blankets that he would send in return to the chief of my tribe. I never bore those presents to my chief, and the scalp of that Navajo chief is one of the things I shall pass down to

the children of my children to remind them of my battles in the olden time.

In the camp of the Navajos, I learned that preparations were being made to kill a woman for the crime of being a witch, the charge being made by a man who had sought her love in vain. I thought little of the matter when it first came to my ears, for of all evil things witchcraft is most evil; and anyhow, a Navajo woman is but a crow. But when the time came for the woman to be killed I went to the plains with the people, as the spectacle was to be a great one. The people seemed to rejoice that the woman was to be killed, and to be glad that the severest punishment had been chosen for her; and among them all, she did not have one friend. I know now that the men rejoiced because they longed for her in vain, and that the women rejoiced because they were jealous of the doomed woman's beauty.

The chiefs came in their feathers and the warriors in their paint, while the women, who are always mean and of little souls, gibed one to the other and were glad that the hated woman was to die. There, too, was the husband of the woman, and also the man who had loved her and had charged her with sin when she had repulsed him. The husband was a

dull-looking man, with the face of a brute, and the lover was a proud man, who spread his blanket and strutted as though glad to vent his spite by having a woman killed. I liked not that man when I saw him first, and when he passed near me, I raised my club as though I would strike him. Such a thing done by a stranger in my tribe would have fared badly with the stranger; but that man quailed and slunk away, and I knew him to be a coward—a man of no bravery, and not a fit man to gain the love of even a woman of the Navajos.

The chiefs and the old men of the tribe had decreed that the woman should be torn apart by wild horses. That was one of the laws of the olden time; but it is little known now, since the white soldiers ride so much over the land that was once the land of the Indians. I had seen that punishment meted out before; but never did I see such wild horses, nor those that were so beautiful as the ones the Navajos had chosen. The people arrayed themselves in lines, and a stalwart chief led forth the horses. One was as black as the darkness of night, and the other was as white as the whitest clouds of summer. When the horses were ready and strong men were holding their heads, while other men stood ready with the whips,

the woman was brought forth from the hogan where she had been kept.

Among the white-faced people it is likely that you have seen women of great beauty; but I say to you that never, in all your life, have your eyes rested upon a woman so fair as was that doomed woman of the Navajos. She was brought forth all unclad, and her beauty shone upon me as the sun shines upon the earth after a storm. Her form was the form of a goddess, and her eyes shone like the brightest stars of the night. Her hair fell to her knees and was as soft as the hair of an otter. When I first looked upon her I believed her to be no witch, and that the blood that flowed in her veins was not the blood of the brute Navajos, and my heart warmed to that woman in a great love. I learned in time that she was not a Navajo, but had been stolen from another tribe when she was a child. She walked forth as a queen might walk among slaves, and the soulless man who had sought her love in vain lowered his eyes to the ground and slunk back like a dog that had been kicked. The woman saw me and knew me to be a stranger. She saw, too, that upon my face there was a look of love for her. She stretched out her arms to me, and begged me to save her

from the brutes who would murder her; and though I was a stranger, alone, and in a far land, I raised my club that was heavy with flint and commanded the chief to free her. Before I could do more I was pinioned from behind by the arms of a dozen Navajo cowards, thongs were placed about my hands and feet, and I was thrown to the ground. The people then turned from me, and all their interest was centered in the spectacle before them. I began biting the thongs with my teeth, but it seemed that it was not possible for me to get free before the horses would be started on the mad race that would bring death to the most beautiful woman who ever walked upon the earth. Before they bound the woman to the horses she turned to me and told me I was a brave man, and then she knelt upon her knees and said words to the sky. Then strong men bound ropes of hair to her arms and to her legs, and fastened the ropes to the tails of the wild horses. It was a cruel sight to see that fair woman, that sweet, tender woman, bound to wild beasts that would race away and tear her beautiful limbs one from the other. As they bound her I was almost mad with rage and grief; but my thongs held me, and I could not free myself to lend her aid. As I lay there, impotently biting the

thongs that cut into my flesh, I made memory of the men who bound her, and I afterwards killed them and laughed in their writhing faces as they died.

At last the woman was bound, the horses reared and thirsted to be away, and were held in check only by the strength of many hands, and then the woman turned to me and called out: "Farewell to you, O brave stranger of unknown blood! I thank you for the aid you would have given me, and I grieve that you have brought suffering upon yourself for me; for these dogs, these snakes who are cowards and worse than dogs, will kill you when they have seen me torn limb from limb."

Then the men struck the horses with the whips, and just as they bounded away I broke my thongs and stood free. I thirsted for the blood of the men who had bound that woman to the wild horses; but the horror in my heart was so great that I stood impotently, like the others, to watch the mad race that had death at its end.

The death of the woman would have been speedy and terrible; but just as the horses gave one wild leap, the thongs that bound her to one of them broke. She fell free from that horse, and it ran away, while the bonds that

fastened her to the other horse held fast. She struck the ground and bounded up, then struck the ground again, and it seemed that her life would not last as long as it takes a man to breathe. Then she struck the ground upon her feet, and the bonds that held her broke. She made one forward leap that was as swift as a flash of lightning, caught the flowing tail of the horse, and with strength like the strength of a spirit she climbed upon the horse's back. Then with a cry of defiance she waved her hand in menace as the horse shot away over the plains. The way was full of danger to the woman, as she had no means of making the horse obey, and the plains were full of holes and *arroyos;* but it was the gladdest sight I ever saw. It turned the blood in my veins to fire, and I gave the terrible war-cry of my people, and raising my giant's club in the air I crushed in the head of the nearest man at a blow. Then the whole tribe turned upon me and fought me backward, step by step, until it seemed that my time had come to bite the dust. I slew five of the men, and then they pressed me hard; and, when it seemed that all was over with me, I saw the black one of the wild horses racing toward where we were fighting. The horse had run wildly away when

the woman had broken loose from his tail, and now he was racing home again. When I saw him coming, I believed that I might catch him and go free; and, swinging my club to the right and to the left, I ran straight through the people, breaking some heads as I went, and I caught the wild horse by the mane, while the people stared in wonder. I swung myself to his back, I laughed in the teeth of the Navajos, and I sped away over the brown sands of the plains in pursuit of the woman, who would now be fairly mine if I could reach her and save her.

The horse that bore the woman was far ahead of me—so far that he seemed only a speck on the edge of the distance. I cut a strip from my blanket, slipped it into the mouth of the horse I rode, and then I believed I might overtake the woman; for she had nothing but her hands to guide with, and her horse ran one way and another and not in a straight line. I was in great fear, though; for if her horse should fall into a deep *arroyo*, she might be killed by the fall. I rode for two hours before I came to the woman, and when I came to her, both the horses were spent from long running. With another strip cut from my blanket, I lassoed the horse she rode, and then we dis-

mounted and tied the horses to bushes of cactus.

In the latter years of my life I have dwelt much with the white-skinned peoples. I have talked to their wise men, who asked me much of the gods and the old tales of my tribe. I have even learned to read in their books, and I know so much of those people that I can talk as they talk. I have many times heard them speak of love and of gratitude; but I say to you, Señor, that no man knows so well as I the meaning of those words. When the woman came down from her horse there was such a look in her eyes as I expect to see in the eyes of the deathless women who dwell in the bright hunting-grounds that lie beyond the grave. She came to me with that look on her face; she placed her round arms about my neck; she nestled my head to her shoulder as a mother nestles a child; and then she told me she loved me above all the men and the things of earth, and that she would be my slave and would follow me until the day of her death. It was then, Señor, that I learned to love. The woman's touch brought ecstasy to every fiber of my flesh, and I took her in my arms I pressed my lips to hers in kisses that seemed to bring our very souls together, and I forgot the

Navajos, I forgot my own people, I forgot all except that I was young, that the world was beautiful, and that she I loved—she who was the very heart of my heart—was in my arms. Ah, Señor, you white-skinned men know wondrous things; but until you know such a love as I have known, until you know the first wild, mad love of a free child of nature, you know not the true secret of joy.

I took the maid with me, and we went to the land of my own people. I went, not like a man who goes to seek honor among the men of his kind, but like a man content who might have dwelt in paradise—a man with no sorrow in his memory; a happy man. My chief chided me, but when he saw the maid he took back his words, and said that I had done well. Then I builded me a *can-nee* of the skins of buffalo and was happy—happy as few men ever are. But in time there came thoughts of the brute-faced husband who had known the love of my peerless maid, and thoughts of the cowardly, strutting lover who had sought to work her doom. Then fierceness came again into my soul, and I knew that happiness would not abide with me so long as those two men breathed the breath of life.

I went among my people and I chose ten

men,—ten men who, like me, were young,—and I induced them to join me in a raid on the tribe of the Navajo people with whom my wife had dwelt. When we went forth I rode the milk-white stallion that my maiden had ridden, and I left her the black horse as a token that I would safely return. When we came to the land of the Navajos, we went boldly among them as a band of conquerors might go among a tribe of slaves. We were but ten and one, and they were many; but we were men with right on our side, and they were only Navajos, who had sought to do a cowardly thing. The chief who had bound my maiden to the horses met us with parley, and asked us what we desired, that we rode into their land in the gear of war. My face was masked with paint, and he knew me not, and I gave answer:

"A young warrior of our tribe has come from the land of the Navajos bearing a woman who was once wife to one of your warriors. We come to get tidings of that man."

The chief answered:

"The man has taken another woman to wife, and has forgotten the false woman whom the witches helped to ride to your land on an untamed horse."

Then I said: "There was a man who was a

"When we went forth, I rode the milk-white stallion that my maiden had ridden."

lover of the woman, and who charged her with being a witch. What of him?"

The chief laughed and said: "Oh, he has a wife, and some lovers, too, and has forgotten the woman who rode to your land."

Then I said: "Bring forth this man who was the woman's husband! Bring forth the last woman he has taken for a wife, and bring, too, the man who was the lover!"

The chief obeyed and brought them forth; but they all feared danger, and they brought forth also full fifty of their warriors—that being all who were near.

Then I said: "I am he whom you bound with thongs; I am the man who slew five of your coyotes, who are called warriors; I am the man who rode the black stallion after the only beautiful woman that ever dwelt in the land of the Navajos, and I have come to take the life of the coward who was her husband, and of the brute who sought to have her killed. I have come to kill them and the men who bound her to the horses; and, when I have killed them, I will take the last wife of the husband of the black heart, and that woman shall be a slave to my wife. *Defend—for your time has come!*"

Then, with a mighty swing of my stone war-

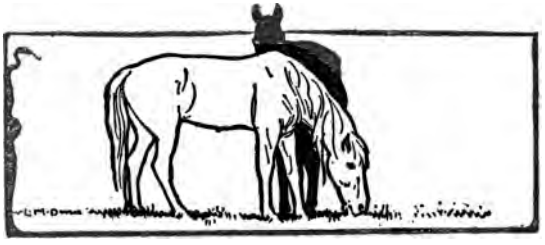
club, I crushed the head of the chief as I would crush the egg of a wild-bird; and with the war-cry of our people ringing on our lips we rode upon those dogs of Navajos, and with every swing of our clubs a white-hearted coyote bit the dust. With my own hand I slew him who had been husband and him who had been lover, and then we slew to the right and to the left—slew all who came in our way, until the ones who were not slain turned and fled like the fawn before the hunter. Then we took the scalps of the slain to pass down to our children, and I lassoed the wife of the man whose life I had come so far to take. I bound her behind me on the white horse, and I took her to the land of my people to be a slave to the fair woman who was my wife, and whom I never allowed to work as the other wives had to do. I have fought often since that fight; I have fought the white soldiers when I would have given my life to have killed one of them: but never have I taken the life of a man when killing was so sweet to me as it was when I laughed in the faces of the men who had striven to murder the woman whose smile was sweeter than victory to me.

That was long in the past, Señor—many moons in the long, long ago. It was when I

was a young man, and eighty springs have blossomed and faded since I was born. Thirty years ago my wife died in my arms—an old woman, but as young to me as that time when we raced for life or death across the bare, brown plains upon the two wild stallions. When she died I came to like not this land, and the spirit of roving entered me. I joined a show owned by a white-skinned man, and I traveled to many places and many cities. I mingled much with the people of your blood. I learned their speech so well that, but for my color, you would not know me for an Indian; and when I returned to my own land, as men will do when old age comes upon them, there came to this land a priest from Mexico telling strange tales of the right and the wrong of life. That priest became my friend; I talked much with him, as I knew his language, and he chided me for the sins of my early days. I know now that those deeds were sins, but I knew it not then, and before I knew it I called them the best things that came into my life. The creed of the priests may be true—I know not; but I would give my hopes of the white man's heaven to be young again—to live again that wild, glad day when I rode that wild ride on the

plains, and at the end of it folded my sweet Zeetah for the first time in my arms.

That is all of my tale, Señor. It is a wild tale—a tale that tells much of bloodshed and battle, and it will not be liked by many of the people of your kind. But you came among us to learn true things of the Indian people, and I have told you a tale that is true.



THE WITCH OF RANCHO SOLEDAD.

IT was one of the burning days of the South-land. The fierce sun smote the brown New Mexican mountains with scorching rays; the bare mesas seemed to shine and quiver in the white glare, and waves of shimmering heat could be seen rising from the waterless soil. It was the season of drouth—that dreary time when the poor fields of the *peons* dry up; when even water to drink is scarce, and when the gaunt spectre of poverty hovers over the stricken land. Down an uninhabited valley, on this dreary day, went a traveller, riding a jaded horse, and both man and beast seemed exhausted from weariness and thirst. The

man was young: the rounded curves of youth still beautified his figure; but in his eyes was the look of one who had sought long and far for something he had not found.

In time the traveller turned from the windings of the valley and rode over a low mesa into a smaller valley, and just as the sun was sinking in the west he drew rein before an adobe Mexican house of the better class. In answer to his call, a gray-haired Mexican appeared in the doorway. The traveller explained that he had journeyed a long distance; that he was weary, thirsty and hungry; that his horse could go no farther, and he craved the Mexican to give him entertainment.

"No man craves shelter in vain among my people," said the Mexican. "Alight: enter my poor house, which is now your house, and you and your horse shall be cared for. Ho, Ramon!" calling a servant, "stable and feed the horse, and then prepare food for the guest."

The servant, a thin, shambling Mexican, bowed low, took the horse to the corral, and the old man and the traveller entered the house.

"I have no wife, no child, to welcome you," said the Mexican, as they entered the dim

room. "I live alone with my servant and my thoughts, save when some chance Indian or traveller reaches this secluded place, and I fear I shall be but sorry company for you. But sit you down, rest, and I will give you wine, which, after all, holds a truer welcome than a man may get from a woman; I will give you food, that staff of life which brings dull content to those of dull minds; I will give you tobacco to lure sweet languor; and then, if you prefer solitude, I will retire and leave you alone with memory—that many-faced companion from whom no man can flee."

The words and tone of the hermit-like Mexican betokened that he was partly crazed; but the traveller heeded little, for besides being weary he was despondent. The world had given him much, but he wanted more, and all he had gained was disappointment. He ate of the Mexican's food, drank of his wine, and then settled himself upon a blanket-covered couch and smoked in silence, while the old man stared at the cemented wall, and seemed to forget that he was not alone.

For an hour the two silent men sat, each engrossed in his own thoughts, and then Ramon, the servant, entered the room and announced that a visitor was without.

"Whom may it be?" asked the old man, rousing himself from his revery.

"It is Mape-ah-sas, the Ute," answered the servant.

"He is welcome," said the old man, his face lighting up; "he is welcome, and my house is his house. Admit him."

The traveller, who knew something of the customs of the natives of the Southwest, wondered why the Indian had so far departed from the local usage as to have himself announced before entering. The servant retired from the room, and soon a small old Indian entered.

The Indian seemed to be about sixty years of age. His thick hair was slightly grizzled; he stooped the veriest trifle, and he walked with a silent, gliding step. He was dressed in the usual costume of the Utes—elk-hide moccasins, deerskin leggins, a "gee-string" of cloth, a shirt of bright colored material, and over all a Navajo blanket. He was short and slight, his eyes were bright and set very close together, and his thin lips were habitually compressed, giving him an eager expression of countenance. The Mexican met him at the door, embraced him, and said in Spanish:

"Welcome to my poor house, Mape-ah-sas,

my friend. It is good to look upon you again—you, who come to me so seldom. Be seated, rest, and eat of the food my servant shall prepare. But first let me make you known to the stranger who tarries with me. Stranger, this is Mape-ah-sas, the Ute. He is a *pwu-au-gut* [1] of renown among his own people, and even among the Navajos and Apaches. He is a medicine-man and my good friend."

"*My-eck!*" said the Indian, scarcely looking at the stranger.

The stranger knew the meaning of the Ute salutation, and he answered in Spanish: "I welcome you, friend."

The servant brought food to the Indian, and when he had eaten he rolled a brown cigarette and began talking to the Mexican, speaking in the low, guttural dialect of the Utes, which the traveller did not understand. After the conversation had lasted a few minutes, the Mexican turned to the stranger and said:

"It is not courteous that I and my friend speak in a tongue that you do not understand. Mape-ah-sas knows something of the Spanish language, and we will speak in that, craving

[1] Medicine Man.

your pardon for our forgetfulness in not doing so sooner."

"I know but little Spanish," said the stranger, "and would not understand it much better than the language of your friend. Besides, your conversation concerns only him and you, and I beg you not to trouble yourselves on my account."

"We speak no secrets," said the Mexican, "and would like you to join in the talk; for pleasant converse is potent to drive away the cares that stay with silent men. But the *pwu-au-gut* knows scarce ten words of the English language, and if you are not familiar with Spanish we cannot all three converse unless I act as interpreter, which I shall be glad to do."

"I beg of you not to trouble yourself," said the stranger.

Mape-ah-sas now turned in his seat and gazed intently into the stranger's face; then he said something in his native tongue to the Mexican. The Mexican shook his head in dissent, but the traveller could see that the medicine-man persisted in the statement he had made. As he felt sure that the remarks of the Indian touched himself, he asked the Mexican what was said.

The Mexican smiled faintly, and replied: "Mape-ah-sas asks if there is not Indian blood in your veins."

"There is none—not a drop," answered the stranger, also smiling.

The Mexican translated the reply, but the Indian shook his head, and peered more closely at the stranger.

"Mape-ah-sas says the Indian blood flows in your veins," said the Mexican gravely. "Mape-ah-sas is a great *puu-au-gut*, or magician, among his people, and he makes but few mistakes. Review carefully your knowledge of your genealogy, and try to remember if a slight strain of Indian blood may not have been mixed with the blood of your ancestors. And if it prove to be so, Mape-ah-sas may tell you some things that are strange, for he would then speak to you as one Indian speaks to another; and I believe he has garnered all the strange knowledge that is known to the unschooled wild peoples of the West and South."

The traveller was amused at the earnestness of the other two men; but he welcomed the episode, as it was causing him to forget the dull regret that was with him night and day. He smiled and answered:

"You may say to our interesting friend that

I am absolutely sure there is no Indian blood in my veins. All my ancestors were more or less worthy Anglo-Saxons; I half regret, though, that I am not wholly Indian, for while their knowledge is only slight their cares are but few, and one might find a dull kind of content if he lived the empty, simple life of an Indian."

"Speak not hastily, my son," said the old Mexican gravely. "The Indians, like us, are the children of God, and while they may have but little of our knowledge, they may be wise in many things that are beyond us."

Mape-ah-sas rose, placed his blanket carefully over the back of a chair, advanced to the stranger and took his hand. He looked steadily at the palm for a little time and then gazed intently into the stranger's eyes. After searching the man's eyes for a few moments he straightened himself to his full height, still retaining the hand; then his face became rigid, his eyes took on a wide, staring expression, and to the intense surprise of the stranger he began speaking in the purest English.

"Stranger," spoke the rigid Indian, "the wild blood calls to the wild blood the wide world over. The scent of the forest is dear to

The trance of Mape-ah-sas.

you as it is dear to me; the evening sunlight falling on the everlasting hills makes beautiful pictures to your eyes as it does to mine; the sun, the moon, the myriads of stars, speak to you of infinite space, infinite eternity, infinite mystery. The petty rules of the tame people of civilization are galling to your soul: like me, you love the wide plains, the deep forests and the wild mountains. O stranger of the white skin, in the veins of your body flows the Indian blood—the Indian blood that makes you known to me, and will make you known to all Indian men of magic, no matter of what tribe they are. The Indian blood in your veins is but little—so little, indeed, that its first advent into the stock of your people has been forgotten; but it is there, and it is known to me. It is not good for Indian blood to flow in any but Indian veins; it is an Indian law that children of mixed blood shall not live. But as the sin of which you are a distant fruit is of the long ago, you shall be my friend, and I will teach you of the Indian knowledge—a knowledge that few but Indians ever know."

The Indian ceased speaking, and stood with a vacant expression on his face, still holding the white man's hand.

"You told me he spoke no English!" said the stranger, addressing the Mexican.

"Be silent," replied the old man, speaking almost in a whisper, "Be silent, and you may learn some wondrous things. Mape-ah-sas is now entranced. I have seen him thus before."

The Ute stood with upturned face for a few moments; then the tenseness of his attitude relaxed, a look of dullness came into his face, and he released the stranger's hand and returned to his seat. After sitting in silence for a little time he spoke in the Ute language to the Mexican, who turned to the stranger and said:

"Mape-ah-sas says he knows the Indian blood is in your veins; he knows that you are troubled; and, if you desire, he will endeavor to help you in the fulfillment of the wish that has possession of your heart."

The traveller stared curiously at the two strange figures before him—the old Indian sitting quietly in his chair, apparently without a thought in his mind; the Mexican, speaking of magic and of supernatural things in as easy a manner, as though they were the simplest things in life. The situation was strange, and the spell of its weirdness was taking hold

upon the traveller. Why was it that that unlettered Indian could speak in good English? Why was it that the Mexican, who seemed a man of some education, should believe so implicitly in the wild statements of the medicine-man? And what if, after all, these strange things might be true? It might possibly be true that Indian blood was in his veins. Might it not be true that the power of the Indian could help him to the realization of his wish? There was a wish in his heart—a burning, unsatisfied wish. There was a woman whose memory was in his mind by day and by night, whose image appeared to him in his sleep. And if this claim of magic might be proved,—if the woman could be with him again; if they might spend one short hour together, as in that glad old time before he had become a wanderer upon the face of the earth and she had immured herself from the world,—he believed that life would be more endurable.

Mape-ah-sas spoke to the Mexican, who translated to the stranger:

"Mape-ah-sas says it is well, and that your wish shall be fulfilled. If you desire, the fair woman shall be with you once more; but make sure first that that is your desire, for

that instant of bliss may be atoned for by years of longing and regret."

The stranger stared at the two men in wide-eyed astonishment. Could they, then, read his mind? He was sure he had not allowed his thoughts to form themselves into spoken words, but the answer that had been given him was as apt as though it had been a reply to a question. He shook himself to make sure he was not dreaming; and for the second time during this strange interview, it occurred to him that there might, after all, be some truth in this magic in which the other men seemed so implicitly to believe. "Ask Mape-ah-sas when my wish shall be granted," he said to the Mexican.

"This very night, within the duration of the present darkness that now hangs over the earth," translated the Mexican. "This very night, if you are not afraid."

"I am not afraid; why should I be?" answered the stranger. "Life is a fearful thing, and I do not fear even it. What would the *pwu-au-gut* have me do?"

"He would have you retire to the room where you will sleep. Come, let me conduct you to your chamber."

The Mexican led the way to another room;

the stranger followed him, and was followed in turn by the Indian. The room they entered was a very large one: the ceiling was much higher than the ceiling of the room they had been in; and a wide, high window, opening to the south, let in great floods of moonlight, making the room so light that one might almost have read large print. On the floor was a carpet of Navajo blankets; a bed, built into the wall, was covered with the same kind of blankets; and on one side of the room was an archway that was closed with two blue Chimolla curtains of fine weaving. A low chair, covered with blankets, was in the room; but there was no other furniture, save the bed. The Mexican brought a pair of deerskin slippers, and the stranger donned them instead of his dusty shoes.

"Now lie down upon the couch," said the Mexican.

The traveller stretched himself at full length upon the bed, pillowed his head upon a folded blanket, and looked curiously at the other men. A sense of rest soon came to him—a delicious languor that made all unreal things seem half true and all true things half unreal.

The Mexican sat down on the low chair,

and the Indian lay down upon the floor, prone upon his face, and stretched out his arms toward the northwest. The languor that had come upon the stranger made him so indifferent that he scarcely noted the strangeness of the actions.

After lying silently on the floor for a little time the Indian arose, approached the bed, and placed his cheek to the stranger's breast. After remaining in this position for a few moments he waved his arms over the traveller's head, retreated a few steps, and began chanting in a weird, uncanny tone. The weirdness of the chant was indescribable. It was like what the cry of a lost soul might be if it were mingled with the sough of the wind in a pine forest; and as it went on, the old Mexican drooped his head upon his hands, and objects became indistinct to the eyes of the traveller. Was this tale of magic true, then? Was the *pwu-au-gut* placing him under a spell that would enable his soul to leave his body and go to the loved woman who was thousands of miles away, locked behind the stern walls of a convent? The objects in the room became more and more indistinct: the silent Mexican seemed to be receding farther and farther away; the sound of the weird chant became

lower and lower; and, before he was aware, the traveller fell asleep.

How long he had slept he did not know; but when he awoke he was conscious of a delicious languor, like that which comes to one who awakes from a sleep after a plunge in the waters of the ocean. The sensation of complete rest was perfect, and at first he was so indifferent to his surroundings that he scarcely opened his eyes. However, he became fully awake before long, and raised himself upon his elbow and looked about him. He was still lying, dressed, upon the blanketed couch; the deerskin slippers were yet upon his feet; the soft moonlight was shining through the broad window. But the Ute and the Mexican were gone. Sounding faintly, as though coming from a long distance, he heard the noise of the chant, rising and falling in weird cadences. This, then, was the magic of the Indian *pwu-au-gut!* This, and this only! The Indian was something of a mesmerist, and could put men to sleep; and because this thing seemed miraculous to his heathen mind he believed himself to be endowed with supernatural power. The traveller was somewhat sorry that the charm had failed; that the Indian had not

really been able to take him to the side of the beautiful woman who was dearer than life to him—the woman that he had lost, but still loved. But it was for the best, after all, that there was no such charm or power as the Indian boasted. The night was beautiful, the blanketed couch was soft and welcome to him after the fatigues of the day, and it were best to sleep and forget. It surprised him, too that for a little time he had almost believed in the power claimed by the Indian.

The gaze of the traveller wandered over the room. There was a lace curtain at the window that he had not noticed before, and those blue Chimolla curtains at the door were of finer texture than he had at first observed. Again came the sound of the distant chanting. He smiled. He had heard that Indian medicine-men believe implicitly in their own powers; and no doubt Mape-ah-sas thought the chant, even then, was enabling the man and woman to be with each other.

While the traveller was musing idly he saw the blue Chimolla curtains that covered the portière move; then they slowly parted, and the form of a beautiful woman came into the room. He gave a violent start. Could it be true, after all, that the charm had worked and

that the woman was coming to him? A moment sufficed, however, to show him his error The woman who entered the room was surpassingly beautiful, but she was not the one named in his wish. She was a woman who might have been twenty, or might have been thirty, years of age; she was of medium height, and her figure was full. Her hair was neither black nor brown, but was of that indescribable shade that is between the two colors. Her ripe lips were full and beautiful; her features were finely molded, and her eyes were of that shade of dark shimmering blue that no man can describe. Over her hair she wore a thin, gauzy black *rebosa;* her neck, arms, and shoulders were bare, and gleamed in the moonlight like carved ivory, and she wore a thin, clinging dress. She was superlatively beautiful—as beautiful as any woman the traveller had ever seen; but even then her beauty did not seem so good to him as the more imperfect beauty of the woman he loved.

The woman glided to the side of the couch whereon the traveller lay, and in soft accents she said in English:

"I greet you, stranger: peace be with you!"

"Greeting; and to you peace," answered the traveller, not noticing that he had uncon-

ciously adopted her rather Oriental mode of address.

The languor of sleep was still in the veins of the traveller, and he did not rise, but lay with his head leaning upon his hand. The woman drew the low chair to the side of the couch and sat down, performing the act in so natural a manner that the stranger did not notice that it would have been unusual under most circumstances. He gazed indolently upon her for a time, and then asked:

"Who are you?"

The woman smiled, showing two perfect rows of pearly teeth.

"Tell me, first—who are you?" she said. "You, who come from a shadowy past and go forth to meet a still more shadowy future; you, who comprehend neither time nor eternity; you, who play with life and wish for death?"

"I am a wanderer, roaming over this strange Southwest for distraction. I am a guest for the night at this house, which is a strange place to me; but I did not know the house sheltered you also, as my host told me he had neither wife nor child, and he did not speak of other guests."

To recline on the couch and talk to the

woman, whose name he did not know and whom he had never seen before, seemed to the man to be a perfectly natural thing.

"Neither has your host a wife or child," answered the woman. "He lives alone with Ramon, his servant, save when some Indian or traveller visits his solitary ranch. But he is rich in guests this night; for, besides you and me, Mape-ah-sas, the *pwu-au-gut* is with him. Do you not hear the chant he is making?"

As she spoke, the faint sound of the weird chant came again to the ears of the traveller.

"I hear the chant," he said smiling. "It was begun to work magic for me. I was put to sleep, but there its potency seemed to fail, and nothing came of it."

"Indeed!" said the woman, smiling strangely. "And you are disappointed? Do you regret that the fair woman of your love is not with you instead of me? Are you sorry that you are denied the pleasure of holding her in your arms for one last time? After all, is it not best for you not to see her? She has taken vows to cast all human loves from her heart; and it is best, for her sake, that she sees you no more."

The traveller sat bolt upright in astonishment, and stared at the woman, who sat placidly by the side of the couch.

"Are you all bewitched here?" he asked. "Are you all bewitched, or am I asleep and dreaming? You read my inmost thoughts as though my mind were an open book in your hand. You fathom the hidden secrets of my heart. Am I asleep? Are you a witch? Explain these mysteries to me."

Again the woman smiled that peculiar smile that added to her beauty.

"You ask for explanation of mysteries," she said—"you, who have lived out the little number of your days surrounded by greater mysteries! Have you seen the sun rise in the east and float to the zenith of the heavens? Have you listened to the sound of the sea-waves breaking upon the shore? Have you seen the towering mountains that rear their crests to the sky? Have you seen children born, grow to maturity, and sink back to earth? Have you felt the blood of life coursing in your veins? Have you thought of the thing called existence, whose very beginning you cannot remember, and whose ending you cannot conceive? Let us not talk of mysteries—for we know not whereof we speak."

The traveller gazed long and wistfully at the beautiful face that was before him.

"How marvellously beautiful you are!" he ejaculated, almost unconsciously. "He who has your love must be indeed a happy man."

"No man has my love," said the strange woman; "and even with my love no man that I could love would be happy. History tells of no happy men. Happiness, to the great, is a fleeting mirage that ever vanishes before it is overtaken; and I could love none but a great man. Even with you, love has not brought happiness; yet you would not forget your love, if you could. You love deathlessly a woman who can never be yours in this life. That is your fault in part and hers in part, but now is irrevocably true. You did not appreciate the beauties of your paradise until you were driven from it, and now the woman who was to have been your bride is the bride of the cloister. But it may be consolation to you to know that the woman suffers as you suffer, and that she loves you to this day even as you love her."

"You know her, then?"

"I did not say so. But I know that she suffers as you suffer, and as most of the chil-

dren of the earth suffer. Ah! I myself have suffered; but that is past and was almost forgotten until your sorrow brought it to my memory again. List! Do you not hear the chant of the *pwu-au-gut?*"

Again was faintly heard the indescribably weird wail of the Ute, floating on the breeze like an echo.

"I hear it, but it is in vain," answered the traveller. "It was intended to take me to the woman I love, or bring her to me; but it has served only to excite afresh the bitter memories that I am striving to cast out of my heart."

"It is not in vain," said the woman with sudden decision; "it is not in vain, and I, Raymeya, say it. Many of the powers given to us of this world are abused; but there is a power, a human power, that will enable your wish to be gratified. And, if nothing more, it will serve to teach you one more of the great truths of nature. It is a human power, yet a divine one, as all great human powers are. Many truths are hidden because the poor, cowardly souls to whom they might be revealed go skulking through the years that lie between the cradle and the grave, fearing to look up and learn the truth. You are not one of those,

and the truth shall not be withheld from you. Rest now, and hold your peace."

The traveller lay back upon his blanket-pillow, and closed his eyes for an instant; but when he opened them again the woman was gone. It seemed strange to him that she had vanished so suddenly and silently: he had not heard a footfall, nor the rustle of a garment—but she was gone.

As the man lay wondering over the disappearance of the woman, it seemed to him that the room grew darker; a gust of cold air came in, and then he felt a sudden movement of the atmosphere that could not have been made by the wind. The darkness grew denser: for an instant all light was gone, and then the room was again dimly light. As the light returned the traveller almost swooned from astonishment; for there before him, seemingly in her proper person, was the woman of his earnest wish. He stared in gaping wonder for an instant: he seemed to lose consciousness for a minute period of time, and then he found himself in the middle of the room approaching the woman. He went within arm's reach of her and stopped to gaze once more upon the well-beloved features that he had not hoped to look upon again in life.

The woman stood in the centre of the room, her eyes closed, her hand stretched forth as though she might be just awakening from a sound sleep. She was clad only in a clinging white garment that half revealed the lines of her form, and her dark hair showed through a gauzy veil that covered it. The man gazed at her reverently, spoke her name, and asked if she knew him.

"I know you; yes," came in low, faltering accents from the woman's lips. "I know not if I be dead or living; but I know you—know you and love you."

The man would have clasped her to his bosom, but just then the other woman stepped from behind the blue curtains and placed her finger on her lips. She said:

"Do not touch her. By misery and desperation you have been so prepared that no truth is terrible to you; but it may not be so with her. Her life is given up to meditating upon beliefs that say souls leave their bodies but once, and if you waken her—for she is in a state akin to sleep—you may unhinge her mind. You have seen her: you must be content with that."

"Not to speak to her, now that she has come back to me almost from the grave! Not

"I know you, yes."

to touch her—oh, that is cruel!" said the man.

"You may speak to her, then,—one short sentence or two; but do not touch her, and make haste," said the strange woman, standing near, as if to prevent the man from touching the form that stood in the centre of the room.

The man approached the woman he loved and spoke to her, saying words that caused the closed eyes to fill with tears,—which, however, seemed to be happy tears,—and caused tears to come to the eyes of the other woman.

When the traveller had spoken for a little time he involuntarily turned his face away to hide his emotion, and when he looked again the form of the sleeping, or entranced, woman was gone, and he was again alone with the strange woman who had first come to him. He stood for a time in a dazed stupor, unable to comprehend the strange events that had filled the last few moments of his life. Then he turned and threw himself face downward on the couch and gave up his mind to thoughts of her who had come to him across the distance and the darkness—who had miraculously come to him while he sorrowed, as it were, in the desert. What his thoughts were no man can guess. Had he been of a morbid temper-

ament he might have grieved as one grieves who sees the grave yawning before him; but with this man, whatever his thoughts were, they caused him presently to raise his head with a chastened, half-happy look upon his face. He turned to the strange woman who was again sitting by the couch, and asked:

"What are you called? Are you a sorceress? How do you compass these strange things?"

"I am called the Witch of Rancho Soledad," gravely replied the woman. "I am also known to some as the Witch of the Deserts of Chihuahua, and under that name a not very enviable reputation has been fastened upon me, of which you may have heard. It is said by ignorant ones that in Chihuahua I dwell in a dark cavern; that I consort with snakes and vultures and owls, and that the beasts of the desert are my servants and do ill deeds at my bidding. In the far south, in Peru and in Chili, I am known by the name of Raymeya; but there also I am known as a witch, and they call me the deathless one. It is true that I know things that are not known to many people; but I trust that to you I need not say that I am not a malignant sorceress, and that I am not in league with the powers of evil."

"But your strange powers?"

"Have you not heard of the astral body that every human being has?" replied the woman. "That will explain the occurrences of this night to you as far as I have time to explain them now. It will not explain them, of course, to any one who has mental power to endeavor to trace things to their sources. Men see great bodies moved by wires, and the thoughtless say it is done by electricity; but what wise man on the face of the earth can say what that magic electricity really is? A wise man once saw an apple fall from its branch to the ground, and he explained it by saying it was due to the force of gravity; but who among all the wise of the world knows what is gravity? So in telling you of the attributes of the soul,—for the body is but clay—I would be telling you of things that you could not understand, and that I myself do not understand farther than to know that they are some of the mysterious truths of existence—mysterious as all truths are."

"But the half-crazed Mexican? And the wild Indian? Why do they have knowledge that is denied to me? Why may I not know as much as a wild man?"

"Speak not slightingly of wild men," said

the woman gravely. "Odin (for there was in reality such a man) was a wild man; Moses was a wild man, and likewise Mahomet—wild in the ways that the people of this day are taught to call wild."

The woman was silent for a time, gazing upon the reclining man with a half-smiling, half-wistful manner. Suddenly she rose and said:

"I think that some time I may see you again and know you better, and perchance you may come to know more of me. I know that I must seem a mystery to you, and truly much of mystery has been in my life. The tale of my life is a strange tale—stranger than the wildest dreams of poets: and some time I may tell it all to you, but not to-night. But know this: life is terrible, yet it is good to have lived; all things are mysteries, but out of these mysteries will come knowledge and truth; many things are fearful, but there is nothing to fear. You and I and the people we know and the deeds we do and the mysteries that come before us are all mere parts in an infinite purpose—a purpose that will unfold itself as time and eternity go on, and as it unfolds will fill us with wonder, with awe, with love and devotion. For all things are

good. They seem bad only because we do not know their purpose. Fear not! In this world, and in all worlds, all is well with those who learn to wait. And now farewell!"

The woman—witch, sorceress, spirit, whatever she was—was gone; the traveller was alone in the dim room; the languor of sleep was stealing through his veins, and the moon was going down and leaving the world in darkness. The traveller slept till morning. When he awoke he went to the outer room of the house, where he found Ramon, the servant preparing a breakfast for him.

The servant said that his master had gone to a distant *rancho* upon a matter of business, and as he was compelled to start early in the morning he had not disturbed his guest to say farewell. The traveller asked for Mape-ah-sas the Indian, but the servant said curtly that he too was gone; and when the traveller asked regarding the strange woman who had spent the night there, the servant gazed at him dumbly and professed not to understand.

The traveller ate his frugal breakfast, and as he could gain no further information, he mounted his horse and set out to ride to the little town of Amargo, which place was a long day's journey away. He rode all day, not

meeting a single person, and just as the sun was setting and causing long shadows to fall behind Archuleta Mountain, he came within sight of the straggling village. Just before he reached its outskirts, he overtook a solitary horseman riding a jaded pony, whom he found, upon coming up with him, to be Mape-ah-sas the Ute. The traveller endeavored to talk to the Indian, but Mape-ah-sas only gazed at him in a dull, surly way, said "*No sabe*," turned his pony down a by-road and galloped away, soon being out of sight among the pines and piñons.

LO-TO-KAH AND THE GOLDEN WOMAN.

THE Indian agency of the allied tribes of the Capota, Moache, and Weeminuchee Utes is located in a picturesque part of the valley of the little river in Southwestern Colorado, to which still clings the old Spanish name of *Rio de los Pinos*,—the River of the Pines. The little adobe huts and frame houses that constitute the agency, stand in the narrowest part of the valley, and high mesa walls rise from the river on either side. Far away in the distance, their crests showing high above the mesa lines, can be seen the La Plata Mountains and the mountains that hem in grim old Cumbres Pass.

The main building at the agency is a long, huge affair built of logs, with a "lean-to" addition of boards at either end. It looks like

a fort, and indeed its walls were made thick for good reasons. The doors of this building open toward the river, and there is a platform of rough boards that runs the entire length of the structure. On a clear day,—and the most of the days are clear, with a crystalline clearness not known to lands of lower altitude,—one can sit on this porch and look for miles up and down the valley; watch Indians on horseback, racing after colts or cattle; and squaws, tanning hides or cooking over rude tripods.

For a month the old log agency building was my home. During the day I lived among the Indians, listening to their strange tales of magic, of battles and hunts of the golden long ago, before the day of reservations and Indian agents, and at night—the month was March—we clustered about the big open wood-fire in the doctor's quarters, and talked of the hundred thousand things that isolated men with time to spare can find to talk of.

The two artists who shared the outing with me were working like mad, painting everything in sight from sprawling pappooses to dignified council meetings, and almost every day I was astride a canny little black mare, racing over the reservation—now helping to round up the refractory herd of an Indian,

now going with the doctor to see some sick baby that was almost suffocated in a smoky *can-nee*, and then just riding for the pure joy of riding. That little black mare was nearer human than any horse I ever knew; she would run for the sheer enjoyment of it, and she could leap like a jack-rabbit.

One midnight found me sitting on the agency porch smoking and wondering at the beauty of the brilliant moonlight that filled the valley. About two hundred yards from the building was a cluster of *can-nees*, or tents, one of them brilliantly lighted by means of a bright wood fire, and sharp at midnight there went up from this tent a chorus of as weird, unearthly wails as I believe a white man has ever listened to. I knew it to be some of the "medicine-making" of the Indians, and I thought indolently of going to the place to ascertain if any of the Indians who were my friends were there, and if I might witness the ceremony, but I decided that I was too lazy to move.

I sat so for half an hour, listening to the wail that came from the medicine tent; and just because I had nothing better to do, I was going to turn in, when, without a sound, old Lo-To-Kah stood before me. He was dressed

in full native costume; an eagle feather was in his hair, and he was wrapped in a rich Navajo blanket. He was not known to be on the reservation, and I had not expected to see him.

"Lo-To-Kah!" I said in surprise, "where do you come from? Why are you here?"

"I am here, O friend, for two things. One is to see you, for José Amarillo met me in the Blue Mountains and told me. And the other thing I am here for is to be present at the chant of the Golden Woman. Do you not hear the chant the medicine men are making? That loudest voice is that of Charvys, the fat pig who would not know any difference between the glorious Golden Woman and the meanest squaw who runs naked on the Mojave Desert."

"I hear the chant," I answered, "but what is it all about? And who is the Golden Woman?"

The old man seemed not to hear me, and he gazed away down the valley as though he saw something. As though speaking to himself he said:

"She of the golden hair! The Golden Woman with the heart of gold! Ah! she was more beautiful than the sun in the sky on a May morning!"

"But who is she, or was she?" I asked.

"It is a long story, O friend of mine, and the night grows old," answered Lo-To-Kah. "To-morrow you will ride with the *mah-soot-quicket* [1] to the Rio Florida to witness an Indian ceremony performed by old Mape-ah-sas of the squinting eyes. It is better for you to sleep to-night than to listen to the old tale of the Golden Woman. Another time I will tell the tale to you."

He made a pillow of his blanket, and leaned restfully against the log wall of the building. After smoking for a time in silence he said:

"The tale of the Golden Woman is an old tale of my nation. It is a true tale, and the things of which it tells happened in the old time of the long, long ago—before I was fully a man; before I had ever seen Zeetah, who became my wife. Eighteen summers had come into my life, and that was all, and I was but a boy when the Golden Woman was brought a captive to one of the encampments of my people. She was tied to a horse, riding astride like a man, and she was so weary that she swooned from faintness and fatigue as soon as she was lifted from the saddle. I have but

[1] White physician.

to close my eyes, and in memory I can see that beautiful woman again. I can see her fair face, her eyes as blue as the arch of the sky, and her long silken hair that was of the glorious color of molten gold. There was a time, too,—just a fleeting bit of time, scarcely long enough to be remembered,—when I gazed upon her and was almost sorry my skin was red instead of white; for I thought if I had been white and had been of the blood of her race, I might have won her love. Such thoughts were foolish thoughts, *amigo;* just stray, half-formed thoughts that wandered unasked into the empty head of a boy. And, too, that was before Zeetah had ever been seen by me."

The old man ceased speaking. He leaned his head back against the wall of the old agency building, a dreamy look came into his eyes, and he gazed down the valley. His cigar went out. I lit a match and offered it to him, but he did not see it. A belated Indian swain, returning to his tent from some amorous expedition, passed us and spoke; but Lo-To-Kah did not stir. His mind was wandering back to that old time, almost three-quarters of a century gone, when he had been a youth and had known her who was called the Golden

Woman. It seemed strange to me that Lo-To-Kah, the savage nobleman who had been a very knight in his loyal devotion to the one woman who had been his wife, should lose himself in a flood of memories of a woman whom, I began to believe, he had loved in secret. He had had but one wife; and if a lurking love slept in his heart through all the long years that lay between his youth and his old age, it was a secret that he would not confess, and would not even give a hint of unless in some unguarded moment. After a time he roused himself and said:

"Pardon me, friend—I was dreaming without being asleep. We old men, when we live past the time that is allotted for action, live over the years again in memory, and I was living over again a time that was old before you were born. I will now go on with my tale:

"When I was a boy, and esteemed by some of the vainglorious warriors as being too young for battle, a party of our warriors set out on a raid against a roving band of Kiowas that were journeying beyond Tierra Amarillo. I desired to go with the band, and could have gone, except that Mirdo, who was a sub-chief and had command of the expedition, said that I should not. This Mirdo had longed to pos-

sess my mother when she was a girl, and because she would not wed him, he hated her and my father and myself. Mirdo, who was on his horse, stood up in his stirrups, pointed his goad at me and said:

"'I go forth to lead men, and not children, to battle. Yon Lo-To-Kah is called a Ute, because he was born to a Ute woman; but he acts like no Ute. He is now old enough to be a man, to have lovers, to cheat slow old men out of the kisses of their young wives, and to play in the games of *kan-yute*, where men win horses and blankets. He is not a man in love or games, and he will not be a man in war. He cannot go with any band I lead.'

"I stood in silence, my arms crossed upon my breast, and listened to the talk of Mirdo. And as he talked I promised to myself that a time should be when I would hold the throat of Mirdo in my grasp and make him eat his words and beg for his life like a craven. But I spoke no word in answer; for an Indian, as you know, can bide his time when he promises himself to be revenged upon his enemies. And Mirdo and his band rode away, their feathers streaming in the morning sunlight, and I was left in the camp with the women, the children, and the old men.

The return of Mindo's warriors.

"It was evening when our warriors returned —an evening two weeks after they had gone forth, an hour before the going down of the sun, when from far over that mesa which lies toward the cruel heights of Cumbres, we heard a cry of '*ho-la-ho-ho!*' The cry was a cry of victory. Soon the men came in sight, riding one ahead of another. Both men and horses showed the signs of long travel and hard riding. Mirdo rode at the head, two fresh Kiowa scalps flying from the shoulder of his hunting-shirt; and by his side, strapped to her horse and riding astride like a man, was the fairest and most beautiful woman that ever trod the earth in the valley of the River of the Pines. I liked not Mirdo, and I expected to hear him insult me; but I stood among the tents to greet the warriors. Mirdo rode up with a flourish, dismounted, and called some old women to come and unbind the woman. When she was unbound she swooned, but she soon recovered, for she was a woman who was brave.

"'Who is the woman with the golden hair, Mirdo?' asked an old man.

"'She is my captive,' replied Mirdo. 'The Kiowas took her from the Navajos, and I took her from the Kiowas. She is mine to keep

my tent; she is mine to enjoy; she is mine to work for me. I am Mirdo, and I am a man without fear—a man who deserves the most beautiful woman in the land.'

"So boasted Mirdo; and as he boasted he looked upon the woman with his greedy gaze, and as he looked she cowered and shrunk. Then I spoke to the woman, asking her name and whence she came. The woman could not understand the Ute speech; but she seemed to feel that I was her friend, and she came close to me and held out her hands to me in appeal. I could speak the Navajo tongue also, and Mirdo could not; and I spoke to the woman in that speech, and she answered and asked me to protect her. I gave answer that I would protect her even with my life. And then Mirdo took me roughly by the shoulder saying:

"'Speak not to my woman, you squaw! What! Do you think to play with her and prattle to her. Get you to your mother's tent!'

"Mirdo stood leering into my eyes; and as soon as he finished, I shot my clenched fist into his face and felled him as the blow of a stone axe would fell a sheep. He rose to his feet and drew his knife. The men caught him and took it away, and said that Utes must

fight, not like enemies, but with their naked hands. Mirdo cursed, for he was a coward at heart; but he liked not to be humiliated before the woman he had captured, and he came on. It was the first time I had ever fought a man. When Mirdo came within reach of my fist, I sent him sprawling in the sand again, and again and again, as fast as he rose. Then, after I had almost knocked the breath from his body, while he was lying in the dirt, I put my foot upon his neck, I spat upon him, I threw dust in his eyes, and then I gathered him up as a man might gather a log of wood, and I carried him to the river and threw him in. The water was deep enough to wet the garments of Mirdo and to fill his eyes and mouth. When he came up, I said:

"'O Mirdo! you coyote, who call yourself a chief, look upon the Golden Woman, who has four times been made a captive. First this woman was taken by the Navajos, and because they took her they had the right to do with her as they liked. Then she was taken by the Kiowas, who had the same right for the same reason. Then she was taken by you, and the rights of the other thieves became your rights. But now she is taken by me, mine is the right to do with her as I choose;

and it will fare ill with any man who dares to so much as lay his finger upon her.'

"Mirdo stood glowering at me, his bleeding lip hanging and a look of murder in his eyes. I had not intended to strike him again, but the sight of his big brute face was a temptation that was too strong; and, just as he was ready to snarl some reply to the speech I had made, I struck him, breaking his nose.

"Then Mirdo slunk away, cursing me as he went. He vowed that he would leave the tribe and lay in wait for me in the forest. But an old *pwu-au-gut*, the one who was the teacher of old Mape-ah-sas, whom you know, said to Mirdo that he was a coward, and that if he ever sought to do me wrong save in a fair fight or open battle, he would cause the evil spirit to haunt him all the days of his life. You know, *amigo*, that no Ute would incur the danger of a *pwu-au-gut's* curse; and I knew that I was safe.

"Then the old men said the woman was mine and that I had fairly won her. I took her to my mother's tent, but with no thought of making her my slave or my wife as Mirdo would have done. I told her that she was safe from all danger, and then I sat down on

the ground before the tent and thought. I tried to think of Mirdo and the battle I had fought with him; but I could not think of him, because I was thinking of the Golden Woman who had come into my life so strangely. I sat there all the night, keeping guard over the tent, and wondering what the days of the future would bring forth.

"From that time on life was different to me. Before then I had been a lonely, silent boy, wandering in the forests or sitting aside while the men and boys played games. But it was not long until the Golden Woman became my friend and then my companion; and we talked to each other and wandered together in the forests, and rode ponies from one encampment of my people to another. Not at first, of course; for at first the woman was timid and half afraid. She was afraid of my people, and also afraid of me, for she knew I could make her my slave or my wife if I cared so to do. But she besought me not to take her to wife, and I placed my hand in hers and told her I would guard her, and that her life should be lived as she desired. It was after that—after she had thanked me and kissed my hand—that she became my companion.

"A few times the woman was affronted.

One burly man of my tribe, when drunk upon Mexican mescal, attempted to embrace her. I was sitting in front of our tents at the time, fitting heads to arrows; but her first cry took me to her side, and when I had been there but a little time the brute lay upon the ground in a stupor that came very near being death. I was mad with anger, and after I had felled the man to the ground and knocked him senseless, I sprang upon his body and trampled his face in the dirt. Then I took the Golden Woman in my arms, as a mother might take a babe, and bore her to my tent. When we were inside the tent, she placed one of her soft arms about my neck; she drew my face down to hers and kissed me, crying as she did so. Her kiss thrilled me through and through, and I was in danger of forgetting my promise. And I told her if she desired me to keep the promises I had given, she must kiss me no more. It seemed for a moment as though she, too, were tired of the promise; for she held my hand in hers, and looked wistfully into my eyes.

"After the fear of my people left her, it came about that she would go among them. At first she went only to the women and children; but it was not long until she went

among all, even the chiefs and medicine men. When a child was born in some cold tent on a hillside, the Golden Woman was there. When a woman or a child was sick, there was the woman; and when a plague came upon our people,—when the men died in their tracks as they stood in the camp ground, and little children were daily found dead in the arms of their dead mothers,—then it was that the people of the Ute nation learned to love the glorious being whom we named the Golden Woman. She comforted the sorrowing, cared for the sick, and prepared the dead for burial. She seemed sleepless and tireless; and every hour of the day and night while the plague lasted she would be seen flitting from one tent to another, making tasteful things for the sick ones to eat, and bathing the hot brows of those who were in the throes of death. Our people believed she was a medicine-woman sent from the bright land that lies in the sun. Then some men came from the other Ute tribes, and they took home to their people the tale of this Golden Woman, whose heart was said to be of pure gold. And thus it came to be that this woman was looked upon by us almost as a goddess, and that feasts and chanting are yet given in her honor.

"There are not many secrets among Indians who live in one encampment, and the people knew that the woman was not my wife. I had another *can-nee* made, joining the one my mother had before, and I lived in the outer one.

"In time I taught her the Ute speech, and in time she told me something of her life. She was born in a great city in the East, and had gone to the West to be a missionary among the Indians. She first lived with a band of peaceful Navajos, and learned their speech; then she went to El Paso del Norte for rest. Between El Paso del Norte and Ciudad Santa Fé she had been captured by a roving band of Navajos; but before they had reached their camp they were beaten in battle with Kiowas, and the Kiowas had taken her. The Kiowas started for their own country and were surrounded by the Utes under Mirdo. In this way she had been stolen by one tribe after another, and so swiftly that no harm had befallen her.

"More than this the woman did not tell me, thinking because I was an Indian I would not understand. But I learned in time that she had journeyed to the wild lands of the West because of an almost hopeless hope that she

might find her lover, who had come to the West and had never been heard of again.

"But as time went on, the Golden Woman grew silent as she went about her work of healing the sick. I fancied that she tired of dwelling in my *can-nee*, and when I asked her, she said it would please her if she might dwell alone. It is not well for a woman to dwell alone, especially if the woman be young and as beautiful as a spirit, and I would not give my consent; but an old Navajo woman, who had been taken captive, and who had grown too old to work, also desired to live apart from the others. So the two women, the fair young one and the wrinkled old one, had a hut built in a sheltered part of the valley of the Rio Florida, and there they took up their abode. They tilled some land, and hunters brought them much game, and they did not want for anything. The other people did not at first note the change that was taking place in the Golden Woman; but I, who knew her as well as though she were my sister or daughter, knew that she was becoming crazed.

"After this the years sped on, and I lived my life as it came to me. I met Zeetah, and took her to be my wife. I became a chief among my people, and much honor came to

me. My mother died, my brother was killed by the Apaches, and many adventures of many kinds befell me. Often I journeyed to the ends of the lands that were known to my people, and often the time was long between my visits to these valleys. But whenever I came I went to the hut of the Golden Woman—going alone, as Zeetah did not like to go with me. And always I found the woman living as I had left her, alone with the old Navajo woman. The hair of the Golden Woman became longer and more golden, her eyes seemed to become larger and more blue, and her fair form grew into the very perfection of loveliness. But even the people who cared little for beauty or goodness in women came to see that she was becoming crazed; and then she was safe for a certainty, for no Indian will harm those who are demented.

"One time I took my band of people and went into the West, and for almost two years we did not see the Valley of the Pines. After a time we began, very slowly, to make our way homeward again, but going only by short marches, and hunting and fishing by the way. While we were encamped in a valley in the Blue Mountains, a man came to our camp,

Helen and the dead Navajo woman.

being on his way from this valley to visit one of our tribes in the place that is now Utah. And when he visited us he told me that the Golden Woman was sick in her hut, and that the old Navajo woman was also sick and had lost her mind. Then I told Zeetah what I intended doing, and I saddled my fleetest horse and set out for this place, hoping to see the woman again before she died, or perchance to save her life.

"I had not been to the *hogan* of the two women for two years, and I scarcely knew the place as I came to it. The building in which the women lived was somewhat like the *hogans* of the Navajos or the *wick-e-ups* of the Utes, but it was also better than any *hogan* or *wick-e-up* I ever saw. Wild flowers were trained before the building, wild vines clambered over it, and behind it was a little irrigated field, in which corn and other things were growing. When I came to the place I dismounted and went within. Upon a shelf-like bed built into the wall lay the old Navajo woman, dead. And seated on the floor, in the middle of the room, her wealth of golden hair falling all about her, sat the Golden Woman, moaning and rocking herself to and fro. I stood in the door and gazed upon her, and it was long before she heeded

me. In time, though, she saw me, and smiled a sad, sad smile that almost broke my heart. And she said:

"'So you have returned to me, Lo-To-Kah. Did you find Hugh?'

"I had never heard of any man named Hugh, and I knew not what answer to make. I stood in silence, trying to think, and the woman got up from her seat on the floor. She came and stood by my side and took my hand in hers.

"'Lo-To-Kah, I have been crazed. For how long I do not know, but I know that when last a glimmer of reason and memory was left to me the Navajo woman was living and was well; and now you see she lies dead. It must be that I am very ill, and it may be that I too will soon lie dead in this little hut. Now, when I am dead, I desire that you go forth and journey among the white-faced peoples until you find a man named Hugh; and when you find him, tell him that Helen died with his name on her lips, and that the love of him was the only love that ever was in her heart.'

"She sank down on the floor again, and before I could think of an answer to make, I heard a shout from outside, and upon looking

I saw a small party of Navajo warriors riding toward the *wick-e-up*. I did not fear the Navajos, for our tribes were then at peace. And when they came nearer I saw that a white man was with them. I was glad of this; for I knew not how to set about the task of finding this Hugh, and thought perhaps the white man could tell me. I told the Golden Woman to look, but at first she paid no heed, and she would pay no heed until the party of riders had drawn up their horses and stopped before the door. Then the woman rose to her feet; she brushed her long hair out of her eyes, and with me she went out. As she stepped outside the door I saw the white man leap from his horse with a great shout. The woman saw him the same instant, and stopped in her tracks as though she had been stricken with a palsy. The two white-faced people stood in mute, wondering silence for an instant; then the man called out the name 'Helen.' He sprang forward and clasped the woman in his arms, and all the time he wept as a mother might weep who had found a long lost-child. I thought at first the man might be her father, for he seemed older than she; but he was not her father—he was her lover. The woman nestled in his arms, and then for the first time

in long years I saw the light of perfect reason shining in her eyes; and for the first time since I knew her I saw her with a happy look.

"And then he saw me, and at once he stood as straight and firm as though he were made of stone. 'Is this woman your wife?' he asked in a fierce tone.

"'Is she your wife?' I asked in turn.

"The man flushed hot and red; for a moment he did not speak, and then he hung his head and said: 'No, God forgive me, she is not. You have as much right to her as I.'

"'Why, Hugh, what is all this talk of right?' asked the woman, looking curiously into his face.

"The face of the man hung lower and lower; his cheeks grew first red and then white, and he said, 'It means, dear one, that I gave you up as dead, and married another woman.'

"And then the Golden Woman lay on the ground at his feet, in a faint that seemed like death. And the man took her face in his hands, and kissed her lips, and wept over her as one weeps over the dead. It was a sad thing to see, friend, sadder than I, at that time, could understand. For then I knew only the ways of the Indians, and it seemed to me that if the woman loved the man, and

the man loved her better than the other woman, who was his wife, that he could cast off his wife and take the Golden Woman in her stead.

"In time the woman recovered, and it seemed to me that the shifting light of lunacy was again beginning to come into her eyes; and I, knowing no better, stood by their sides as they talked, and I learned that the man who was named Hugh had been the lover of the woman, Helen, and was to have taken her for his wife. He was an officer of the white-skinned soldiers, and had gone into the West, and the report had gone back to his home that he was dead. Then it was that the first touch of lunacy fell upon the woman, but she did not believe him dead; and saying she was going as a missionary among the Indians, she went to the West to seek him. She was captured, as I have told you. And the man, who had not been killed, in time returned to his home in the East, and found that the woman had gone; and he believed her dead, and he had married another woman. He told the blue-eyed Helen that the woman who was his wife was cold and proud and haughty, and that he did not love her and she did not love him.

"'But she is your wife,' said Helen.

"'Yes, God pity me, she is my wife,' answered the man, his eyes upon the ground.

"What more they said I do not know, for I went with the men to help bury the old Navajo woman; and while we were thus at work, the white man and woman talked, and the Navajos talked to me. They told me that the white man was a man who had first come to their country to fight them, but that he had become their friend, and that more than a year before he had come among them to live, telling them only that he was not happy in his own home. And I knew that he had left his wife, and would never call her wife again, whether Helen married him or not.

"When we had buried the old woman and returned to the *hogan*, the man and the woman were still talking, both speaking in the Navajo tongue, which had come, from long usage, to be the same to them as the tongue of their own people. And I, knowing the thing that was troubling them, asked if a runner might not be sent to the white man's home to learn if his wife still lived, in order that he might take the Golden Woman to wife. The man said that could not be done; then he mused a while, and said to me:

"'Do you know the trails that lead to Santa Fé?'

"'I do,' I replied.

"The man took a paper-book from his pocket, tore out a leaf, wrote upon it, and asked me how much gold I would require of him to carry that to Santa Fé. I replied that I would not do it for gold, but would do it for the Golden Woman. He told me the paper was for a man who lived in Santa Fé, and was to ask him to write to the East and learn if the woman who was his wife still lived. I was told to give it to the man, and then in six weeks' time the man said he would send to Santa Fé again, and get a letter that would let him know what he sought to know. I took the leaf of paper and said I would go. and that I would also tarry in Santa Fé, if he desired, until the answer came out of the East.

"'But the time will be so long,' said the man, and there was a look of great yearning in his eyes. 'The time will be long, Helen,' he continued, 'and when the answer comes I fear it will have no hope in it for us. We are here in the West, away from our people and away from the things they know and do. Let us abide here, among these Indians, who are our friends, and let us spend the remainder

of our days in peace, which we have never yet known. Let me write to Sante Fé, or send word by a runner, saying we are both dead. Then let us live here in this little valley, alone with each other and love.'

"'It cannot be; it must not be,' said the woman. But as she spoke her voice was very low, and her eyes were cast upon the floor.

"'Do you love me?' asked the man.

"Friend, in the eyes of a woman was never seen such a look as was in the eyes of the woman, Helen, when she looked upon her lover. She took his face between her hands; she drew his head down upon her breast and kissed him, and she answered no word.

"Then the man said: 'Helen, I believe my wife is living, and I believe there is no way that I can have your love. I think it is best for me to go away from the Indians, with whom I have cast my lot and go back to my wife and my people, and be an honest man if I can. But I cannot go away unless your love is mine, if but for one fleeting hour. Think! An hour is so little out of a long, lonely life-time. Cannot we live this night, just this one short night, as though we were the only two people upon the earth—as though I had never lost you?'

"A great, yearning, hungry look came into the woman's eyes—such a look as I never saw before, and but once since; the time since being when I saw that look in the eyes of Raymeya. The woman again said, 'No,' but she spoke so faintly that scarcely could her voice be heard.

"'But think,' continued the white man, 'that we may never see each other again. We came together to-day as two people from two graves; neither of us hoped to see the other again in life. Let us forget,—just for one short day let us forget everything but that we live and love.'

"The woman's head was pillowed upon the shoulder of the man, and the man had won the contest that it gave the woman so much joy to lose. And the Navajos and myself went down the valley and made a shelter of the bushes of chaparral, and we left the two white people alone.

"The next day I was told that the white man was going to send one of his Navajos to Santa Fé, and that the woman desired me to stay with her until the courier came back. I talked to her but she did not hear half I said, and she seemed so happy that she would smile when no one was speaking to her. The time

went on thus for a long, long time; and then the white man, as I had done once before, seemed to have become the companion and friend of the woman. They gathered flowers together, and wandered in the woods hand in hand, like two children; but there was little talk of love between them, for this the woman would not permit until the courier returned.

"As the time drew near for the courier to return, both the man and the woman became troubled; and often they would anxiously gaze away over the mesas as though hoping, yet fearing, for the return of the runner and for the news he would bring. I sent a runner to my camp to tell Zeetah why I should be away; and although I greatly respected the two white people, I thought they were fools. For if they had been wise, they would have lived and loved, and forgotten the East, and paid no heed to the going and coming of runners. And when the time came for the return of the runner, I too began to grow restless; and I would go far down the valley, many miles below where the *rancho* of Sevaro now is, to try to meet him. And it chanced that I met the runner fully two hours' ride away from the *hogan*.

"'Ho! Navajo, what news?' I asked as soon as the man came near.

"'The wife of the white man lives,' replied the Navajo.

"The reply so angered me that I almost struck the man, for I knew how it would grieve the Golden Woman and the man she loved. You know, friend, that only Indians with evil hearts will lie. But at that time I resolved to lie, or to induce the Navajo to lie, which was as bad. And I said to the Navajo, whom I knew well:

"'Do you know the *cayuse* that is in my herd—the one with the glossy hair, that can run like a deer and leap like an antelope?'

"'I know that pony,' said the man. 'If it were mine, many are the blankets I would win with it in races.'

"'It is yours,' I replied, 'if you will forget this foolish message that was told to you by the white man in Santa Fé, and will tell the white man and the Golden Woman that the wife in the East is dead.'

"'But the writing that I carry will tell the truth,' said the Navajo, his eyes shining at thought of my *cayuse*.

"'Tear up the writing and say you lost it,' said I. A strange thing was that I did not

feel like a mean man, even when I advised such things.

"And the Navajo tore up the writing and then galloped to the *hogan* with his lying message. And when I returned I saw two happier people than I had ever seen before. Food was cooked and we all partook of it; but while we were eating we heard the sound of a horse's hoofs, and a rider stopped at the door. The Navajo looked frightened, and whispered to me that the new-comer was a half-breed courier from Santa Fé. The man gave a letter to Hugh, and when he read it he said:

"'This is another message saying my wife is dead, and saying the news had been learned after my own courier had started on his return.'

"It seemed strange to Hugh and Helen that two messages, each alike, should be sent so near together, and yet one to say the news was learned between the going of the couriers. But they were so happy that they heeded little, and I gave the *cayuse* to the Navajo anyhow, for he had done what he could to earn it."

Lo-To-Kah pulled a gold hunting-case watch from some fold or pocket in his garments, looked at it leisurely, and asked me for a match.

"But the Golden Woman?" I asked. "What became of her?"

"She is dead," answered the old man, lapsing into the stolidity of his race.

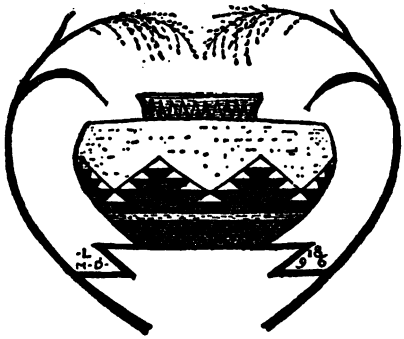
"But what befell her before she died? Come, tell me the remainder of her story."

"I knew a man once, a Jicarilla Apache, who was as crazy in his desire to eat wild honey as you are crazy to hear every word of even the longest stories," said Lo-To-Kah smiling. "But I will tell you the little there is yet to tell. The man and the woman talked long about returning to their own land and their own people; but the wilderness, the forests, and the wild life have many charms for those who have had sore hearts, and they like not to return to the clanging cities and the unwise ways of their kind. And Hugh, the white soldier, and Helen, the Golden Woman, agreed with each other that they would abide in the wild lands of the West. They went away that night, telling me not to say that I knew aught of their going; and I did not learn more of them for many long years. My people believed that Helen had been an enchanted woman, and that she had vanished in the air and gone to her home in the sun. I said nothing to change their be-

lief; and they began the chant of the Golden Woman, and the custom has lasted through all the years since then.

"After that time I knew no more of the Golden Woman for ten long years. Then I was riding alone, going to a great medicine ceremony on the river Gila, to which all men must go alone. While I was riding across the desert I came to a fertile little valley, hidden away among cliffs, from which I saw smoke arising. I thought it must be the encampment of some wandering Indians, and I approached it with caution. And when I rode nearer to the place I saw in the valley a house built of stone, and it was surrounded by fields of corn and melons and trees. And I rode to the house, and upon a porch that was covered with the boughs of trees, there sat a man and a woman. The man was Hugh, the white soldier, and the woman was Helen, the Golden Woman. They were glad to see me, and I was treated like a chief returning from a long absence. But I was grieved to note that the woman was again partially insane. She knew me, she knew her husband as well as ever; but she had forgotten many things that took place in the East. The man told me that they had builded that *rancho* and lived there alone,

but that once each year they went to Santa Fé or some other Mexican town for supplies. And he said that he was happier, living alone with his wife in the wilderness, than he would have been if he had been a king, and had not had her with him. And I believe I understood, in a dim way, how this might be a true thing that he said."



LO-TO-KAH AND THE WITCH.

LO-TO-KAH AND THE WITCH

ONE hot summer day I was leisurely exploring a quaint old Indian pueblo in New Mexico. It seemed to me that the hands of time had been turned back a few centuries, and that I was living in the olden age, when men were either hunters, tillers of the soil, or herders of flocks. In little mud-walled fields men were trimming their vines; far out on the mesas could be seen the browsing flocks, each attended by one or two cotton-clad herders; and coming up from the winding acequias were women and girls, each bearing upon her head a large water-jar. In time I became tired, and was resting in the shade of an adobe wall, when I caught sight of a horseman rid-

ing toward the pueblo. Before he was near enough for me to discern his features, I could tell by his costume that he was no Pueblo Indian; and as he rode through the narrow streets and came into the bare little plaza, I recognized in him my old friend, Lo-To-Kah—he to whom I am indebted for so many strange tales of the Indians. He was very old, but he sat as erect on his horse as any warrior in the prime of life. When he saw me, he rode to my side and called out:

"Ho, friend—vagrant *Merikotch* that you are! I come upon you in all places. I am glad to fall in with you this day for I have ridden alone over many weary miles of the desert, and the face of a friend is a welcome sight to lonesome eyes. To see you brings back memories of the days when I wandered, far from my people, in the strange places of the world; and I love to tell you the old tales of the days that are gone, for in telling them I live them over again in memory. To-night, after I have eaten and rested, I will tell you a tale of one of whom you asked me long ago—Raymeya, the witch. When you asked of her before, I replied not; but I have seen that

[1] *White man.*

woman again, and to-night I will tell you of her. With whom do you abide in this place?"

I led the way to the house of Ho-leka, and Lo-To-Kah, who was well known there, was received as a welcome and honored guest. Food was spread, after which tobacco and corn leaves were brought; and then our old host and his family clustered about the room and listened to the talk of the old wanderer until far into the night. Then, one by one, they went to their couches, until all were gone but Lo-To-Kah and myself. When we were left alone the old man sat in silence for a long time, and then he said:

"Now, O friend of mine, will I tell you of Raymeya, the witch. And, as with all the tales I have told you, I enjoin you not to give it in books to the white-skinned people until after I am dead. I am very old now: my blood is cold and my heart beats slowly; it will not be long till you are free to give the tales to the people of your kind—the white race of unbelievers, who will say that the tales are lies.

"I am just come from Moqui,—the land once known to the whites by the name of Tusayan,—where I went to assist in the dread dance of the snakes. Although not a Mo-

quiño, I am a priest of the Antelope Order, and I was versed in the mysteries of the snake-worship before thirty summers had come into my life. The spirits of birth gave me a wandering foot, and many times have I been absent from the snake-dance because I was journeying in the far places of the world. But I went to the dance this year because it is likely to be the last one I shall ever see. My hold on life is now so feeble that when I close my eyes in sleep I know not whether I shall awake in this world of trouble or in the bright land of peace that lies beyond the grave. At the snake-dance this year I saw Raymeya, the witch, and I say to you that she seemed as young and as wondrously fair as she did at a time that is now more than fifty years in the past—a time when she came to me in the forest and besought me to love her. Ah, she is fair—fairer than any woman who walks upon the earth to-day! But to me she is not so fair, and was never so fair, as was Zeetah, my wife—she who awaits me beyond the grave, and whose image is in my memory by night and by day.

"I have told you of the early years of my life. I have told you how I rescued Zeetah from the wild horses to which the brute Nava-

jos had bound her. I have told you how I avenged in blood the injuries the Navajos had done her. I have told you how she became my wife, and brought me greater joy than most men ever know. I have told you of my journeyings among the white-faced peoples, and of my battles and hunts in my own country. All these tales I have told you before, and I could have told you of Raymeya before if I had cared to speak of her. And even now I am not sure that it is good to tell you of her. You are to me a friend, and I believe I have a warm place in your heart. When I am gone from the earth I desire that you will remember me as a man who knew no fear, and as a man who spoke ever in true words. And this strange tale of Raymeya is so unlike all other tales; it is so much like the lies of an evil spirit; it is so much like the speech of one who is crazed—that I fear you will not believe it, but will think that old Lo-To-Kah spoke to you lies. Come, friend of mine, let us seek our places of sleep, and leave the tale of the witch untold."

I assured the old man that nothing could make me think he spoke in lies; that I might not believe the tale he would tell, but would

believe, at any rate, that he thought it true. And, after much persuasion, he said:

"It is well, my friend; the tale shall be yours. The people to whom you tell it will not believe, but for them I care not. And you may believe, for you already know many unbelievable things that are true of this mysterious, silent land that is my home. You know that a Navajo *shaman* can plant a seed of corn in sterile ground, and make it sprout, grow into stalk, tassel out, and ripen, and all in a single day. You know that many of the Indians have a charm that makes the bite of the most poisonous snake as harmless as the bite of a fly. You know that the Utes can detach the soul from the body, and send it wandering many, many miles from where the body lies asleep. So to you the tale of Raymeya may not seem all made up of falsehood. What the people of your race believe, I care not. They are the greatest of all the races that have had existence since the face of the earth first appeared above the mighty waters; yet with all their wisdom they are a race of wrangling unbelievers. But the night grows old, and I have yet to tell you what I know of the tale of Raymeya.

"After I returned from the great raid

against the Navajos,—of which I told you,—I was treated with great honor by my people. War-songs were sung about me, the children gazed upon me in awe, and my words were held in high esteem in the councils. I loved the honor and the praise; but more than all things else I loved Zeetah, my wife, and I would leave the councils and the dances and the games of the men, and spend the time apart with her. Ah, *amigo mio*, never does a man know the fullness of life till he knows such love as I have known!

"One day in council the old chief of the tribe to which I belonged arose in his place and said that he was old, and the days of his life were almost gone, and that before he was gone he desired to surrender his office to a man who was young and strong, and just and fearless, so that the years to come would be good years for his people. Then, while the warriors and the old men held their very breath in silence, he placed his hand upon my head, and asked me to be chief in his stead.

"I was but a youth then, Señor: an honor had come to me that many aged men had sought through their lives, without finding; but instead of being pleased, I was so grieved

that I almost wept. While I sat in silence, with my eyes cast down, the people began shouting:

"'Lo-To-Kah, the chief! Lo-To-Kah, the chief! We are the warriors of Lo-To-Kah, of the oaken heart, and no people can stand before us!'

"I embraced the old chief and thanked him, and I thanked the warriors who were willing to have me for chief; and then I told them that not yet would I consent to be their chief, but that in six days I would give them an answer. And then I left the council and went to Zeetah.

"I told Zeetah that if I became chief the troubles of the people would become my troubles, and their cares would be my cares. I said to her that many times would I be called from her side to decide among the people, to direct the hunts, to parley and treat with other tribes; but, if I were not chief, much of my time would be hers, and could be spent with her; and I asked her to decide whether I should be chief or not.

"Zeetah said: 'Whether you are chief or not, O Lo-To-Kah, ever will you be found in the thickest of the battles that are fought against our enemies; ever will your voice be

listened to in the councils; ever will the people be guided by your wisdom, and ever will you be a leader among them; for nature has made you a chief, and what is offered you is only your due. Yet the matter is a grave one, for every hour you would be away from me would be an hour that my life would lack to make it complete. I cannot tell, my husband: you yourself must choose.'

"Then we decided that I should go alone into the forest, away from my wife, and away from my people, and there should meditate until I should be guided aright. And I took blankets, and a bow and arrows, and I went alone into the depths of the forest.

"I went many miles, and when night came I builded a fire and lay down by it to sleep. But I was so lonesome and longed so much for my wife, that I was minded to go back in the night and tell the people I would not be their chief. But I did not go, and I slept till the sun came up, and then I killed game and cooked it, and sat down to meditate again. In this way the days and nights passed, until the sun had risen and set four times, and I had made no choice. Then the night came on again, and I sat by my fire and brooded. It was a night of moonlight, and multitudes

of stars shone in the sky above me. Away in the far distance I saw the white-topped mountains that the Spanish people call the Mountains of Silver. Far behind me lay the peaceful valley where my people were encamped, and all about me were the numberless trees of the forest. While I sat there musing and gazing away at the mountains, I heard a soft step in the leaves behind me; and before I could fit an arrow to my bow, there stood before me a woman as fair as any woman who has ever breathed the breath of life. She was a white-skinned woman, and she was clad in finer garments than had ever been seen in the lands of the Indians. Her dress was of white, clinging silk; a black *reboso* was over her head; and on her white neck, and around her arms, and on her fingers, were jewels of so wonderful brightness that scarce could I look upon them. The woman smiled as she gazed upon me, and she said:

"'You are Lo-To-Kah, and you are such a man as I had hoped you would be. I have journeyed great distances to meet you. I have arrayed myself so that I may seem fair in your eyes. Look upon me! Am I not more beautiful than any woman you ever saw?'

"I answered: 'You are arrayed in garments of greater beauty than any I ever saw. You wear stones in which are imprisoned the light of the sun and the splendors of the rainbow. You are fairer than any woman known to me except Zeetah, my wife. What do you desire of me?'

"The face of the woman became somewhat sad when I spoke with such reverence of my wife, and she gazed upon me for a time in silence. Then she said:

"'Lo-To-Kah, I am the fairest woman upon the earth; and even time and the passing of the years cannot mar my beauty. I am wise—wiser even than all of the oldest and wisest men of your tribe, or of all the Indian tribes under the sun; I am rich—so rich that all the wealth of your people would be but a bauble to me; I am great—so great that chiefs are my subjects. What think you of me now?'

"I gave answer that I thought the great Chah-now-woof[1] had blessed her beyond all women; and again I asked what she desired of me, and she said:

"'But one thing do I lack, O Lo-To-Kah, and that thing I seek from you. I am known to many of the greatest men in the world, and

[1] The Great Spirit.

they seek me for lover or wife; but I care not for them, for they are proud, or vain, or false, or have the hearts of cowards. I long for a man in whose heart fear is not; a man who stakes his life upon his promise; a man who is so great that he can rule even me, who am a ruler. Among tribes far from here I heard of you,—for the fame of your deeds has traveled far,—and I came to this land to seek you. I came disguised as a woman of your own nation; and when the people of your kind who dwell in the North came to this land to dance, I was with them. I have watched you since then; I have come to believe that you are the man of men; and now I seek from you the only thing my life needs to make it complete. The thing I seek from you is love.'

"Remember, Señor, that at that time I had never journeyed among the white peoples; I knew not of their ways; and I thought of women in the way my people thought of them. Among my people a man is much greater than a woman; and, too, a man often has many wives. Many of the women of my nation had sought to be my wife, and the offer of the white woman did not then seem to me so great a thing as I now know it to have been. I answered her and said:

"'In the encampment of my tribe there stands a *can-nee*, made of the hides of buffalo, which is larger than any of the other *can-nees*. In it dwells a woman who is fairer and dearer than any other woman of my nation. The *can-nee* is mine, and the woman is my wife. The woman is so dear to me that I have promised her, and have promised myself, to have no other wife than she. Many men in my tribe have more wives than one; and among our men are many who will be glad to take you. Go to them.'

"The woman gazed upon me with a strange look upon her face. She folded her arms, and stood for a time in silence, and then she said:

"'You are but a simple Indian, and you know not what you say. I would not live an instant in a *can-nee* with a man who had another wife. Who loves me, must love me only.'

"I answered: 'I love only Zeetah, my wife. No lips but hers have ever pressed my lips in love, and so it shall be till the day of my death.'

"Then was the woman angered, and she said: 'Fool, you know not what you say! I have untold wealth, great knowledge, great

power. I can fulfill your any hope. Why am I not better for you than a wild Indian woman? I can take you to the ends of the earth; with me you can live in a palace and be attended by slaves. But if you care not for such things, I too will live with you as an Indian woman, if you will but cast off this Zeetah and take me for your wife.'

"I answered the woman not at all; and then she sought to tempt me with her loveliness, telling me she would always be young and fair. That failed; and then she told me a strange tale of a city hidden in an undiscovered valley of the Sierra Madre Mountains—a city of wise Indians who had great houses, and heaps of gold, and great wealth in such jewels as she wore. She said she was the queen of that people, and if I would go with her I might be their king. Then she told me many tales of the far countries of the world, and of the great oceans, and of the mighty ships, and of the cities whose size is so great that they stretch away farther than the sight of a man can carry. She said she had seen all those places and lands and wonders, and would take me to them if I would go. But I still refused, and I would have refused if she had offered me the world, and all it contains.

The woman again became angered, and she said:

"'What, then, if this precious Zeetah of yours should die? Would you then refuse me?'

"My heart was then filled with trouble, for I feared the woman might work harm upon my wife; and I told her that if so much as one hair upon my Zeetah's head was harmed, I would know it to be her work, and that I would seek her till I found her, and would kill her.

"The woman smiled, and told me I could not kill her. Then she became sad, and she gazed upon me a long, long time, and she spoke no word. But in time she roused herself, and said:

"'I have journeyed over the world seeking the man of men, and until I met you I had not found him. And now that I have found you, I learn in bitterness that you are not for me. Fear not for your Zeetah; I will do her no evil. See! I have here a charm that is revered among all Indians. If your Zeetah is ever in trouble I will lend her this, and thus show you that I hold your happiness even above my own.'

"From a fold in her robe the woman drew

forth the dried dead body of a two-headed rattlesnake—a charm that is sacred among all Indians, no matter of what tribe they are. It is the holiest emblem we know, and fortunate is the man whose privilege it is to see it. A two-headed snake is born but once in a hundred years, and it is sent to earth by Chah-Now-Woof himself. While it lives it is devoutly worshipped, and when it is dead its dried body is so potent a token that no Indian will harm any man or woman who has it. With such an emblem, *amigo*, you could journey to the uttermost ends of the lands that the Indians know, and all men would do you homage. With such an emblem I could journey through the heart of a land of foes, every warrior of which might be thirsting for my blood, and no harm would be done me. I asked the woman to allow me to touch the snake, for one had never been seen by any man of my tribe; and because I touched it is one of the reasons that life has gone so well with me.

"Then I asked the white woman her name, and when she told me I gazed upon her in awe and wonder; for the name she gave me was the name of the Great Witch of the South, whose fame is known to every Indian man of

magic that dwells upon the earth. She said her name was Raymeya. When she spoke her name, I cast down my eyes in reverence. And when I looked again the woman was gone. It seemed as though she had melted into the air. I did not see her again until more than five and-twenty years had gone into the past.

"After the woman was gone I again meditated as to becoming chief, but six days passed and I had not made a decision. I returned to the encampment of my people, and before I had been there long the question was decided for me. I found my people in great uproar; for a runner had come to the camp, bearing the tidings that a band of Apaches was coming down upon us, wearing their war-paint, and saying they would wipe our warriors from the face of the earth, steal our horses, and take our women for slaves. I had not been in my *can-nee* an hour when the warriors of my tribe came and called me and told me I must be their chief; for the old chief was sick in his tent, and unless I guided them they would all be killed. Thus was the matter decided for me; my duty became greater than my desire, and I told the people I would be their chief.

"Then sacred *po-o-kan-te* was made by our men of medicine, war-paint was donned, the feathers of eagles were fastened in our hair, and we danced the war-dance and sang the old war-songs of our people while we awaited the coming of the Apaches. It was not long till they came, but they came like snakes and not like men. They tried to deceive us, and cause us to follow a few of them in one direction, while the others stole upon us from behind our backs to kill us. I had fought battles with the Apaches before, and when a few of them fired arrows upon us from the south, I directed my men to stand firm and not to follow them. The numbers of the Apaches were very many, and soon they ceased trying to decoy us, and charged down upon us, thinking we would flee before their great numbers, and leave our women behind. But we stood side by side, as the white soldiers do when they fight, and we all shot our arrows at once. My men were brave, and they stood by me till many an Apache devil had bit the dust; but soon the Apache fiends crowded upon us in such great numbers that my men were forced backward step by step. Soon we had gone backward so far that we found we could not go farther without exposing our women

"I rushed into the midst of the shrieking Apaches."

and children to danger, and at that place I told my men to halt, and fight till they were killed. Then we fought such a battle as was never before known even to the oldest men of my tribe. The Apaches are like reptiles, and they like not to stand on their feet and fight like men; but we killed so many of them that they went mad with anger, and they crowded upon us like hordes of demons. When the fight began I had with me a hundred young men. Soon ten of them were dead, then ten more, and then they fell dead about me as the trees fall in the face of a mountain storm. It seemed to me that soon we should all be killed, and I thought of the Apaches bearing away our women to make slaves of them. I thought of my Zeetah being forced to dwell with some Apache brute, and the thought made me so mad that I forgot all danger. I shouted the terrible war-cry of my people, and I rushed into the midst of the shrieking Apaches, swinging my giant club as I went. I smote the Apaches to the right, and a man fell dead; I smote them to the left, and another of them bit the dust; I smote them on all sides, and as I smote they fell before me. But all the time they crowded upon me closer and closer, and it seemed that my life could

not last as long as it takes a man to breathe. All about me was a sea of writhing, upturned faces, and a multitude of arms reaching out to deal me the blow of death. In my youth I had learned the whirling dance—a dance in which one whirls upon his heel, going around so swiftly that scarcely can an onlooker see his face. When I was sorely pressed by the Apaches I thought of my skill in that dance, and I resolved to make it serve me. I whirled my club so fast that soon I had an open space about me, and then I spun upon my heel, and as I spun I swung my club. I went so fast that my club sped through the air making a noise like the rushing of many waters. The Apaches had never seen such a sight, and as they saw their warriors fall dead before my terrible club they became afraid, and they shouted :

"'This man cannot be killed! This man bears a charmed life! He must be Chah-Now-Woof, and we cannot harm him! Let us flee, or he will kill us all!'

"I knew not where my own men were, for I had gone into the midst of the Apaches. And as the Apaches turned and fled I pursued them, and I dealt a blow of death at every step. The hot blood from gaping wounds

spurted into my face, but I heeded not. The shrieks of a score of dying men rent my ears, but I heeded not. Writhing men who were dying upon the ground rose up and struck at me with their clubs, but I heeded not. And making the war-cry of my nation sound wildly through the forest, I sped on after the fleeing Apaches; and when they were all gone from before me I was a great distance from the encampment of my people. I was bleeding from a dozen wounds—a hundred arrows had pierced my flesh;—but so great had been my rage that I had not felt the stings of my wounds until I stopped to rest.

"I made my way back to the place where the camp of my people had been, and as I went my path was strewn with the dead and dying forms of the Apache devils whom I had slain. One dying man raised upon his elbow, and impotently tried to send an arrow through me; but I jeered at him and went on. And when I came to the place where the homes of my tribe had been, I saw a sadder sight than my eyes had ever looked upon. The *can-nees* of my people had been burned to the ground; the dead bodies of little children were burning in the fires of the tents, and the bravest and best warriors of my nation were

strewn over the place, cold and stark in the grasp of death. And as I went towards the place that had been my home, I came upon the body of my young brother—a brave boy, whom I had loved next to my wife; and as I saw him lying cold and still in death, I broke down and wept as weeps a babe. I lifted his stiff body in my arms, and caressed him; and then I took a vow to kill half a hundred Apache fiends to avenge his death. Then in sorrow I went on, and when I reached my *can-nee* I found it half burned to the ground; and when I looked within, I found it empty."

When the old man reached this place in his tale, a sigh burst from his lips, his wrinkled old face went down into his palms, and for many minutes he did not speak. But the sad spell soon left him, and he continued:

"I went within the ruined remnant of my home, and in the ground that was the floor I found little furrows that I knew had been made by the feet of my wife as she was dragged resisting from her home by the naked devils who had stolen her. And then I turned my face to the sky, and I vowed to Chah-Now-Woof himself that I would spend my life in avenging the wrong done to my wife. Of my

"And I turned my face to the sky and vowed to Chah-naw-woof himself."

thoughts at that time I will not tell you, for I am old, and great excitement does me harm. But many an Apache has gone to his everlasting home because I have sometimes remembered that awful time.

"I found that part of the Apache band had crept away from the ones I fought, and had gone around our camp and set fire to our *cannees* and killed some women and children; and that they were preparing to steal all our women, when my men had turned upon them and forced them to fly for life. But before they were forced to fly they had stolen my Zeetah, and she was the only one of our women they had got. Ah, the thoughts that came to me of my Zeetah being forced to endure the embrace and the leers of a naked Apache fiend!—Señor, allow me to stop, and to tell you no more of this tale."

The old man arose from his seat and strode up and down the room, his face working with excitement. But after a time he stopped, and placed his hand upon my shoulder and said:

"There will come a happier part of my tale, so I will go on:

"I found that many of our bravest and best warriors had been killed. I found that the old man who had been chief for many years

was gone. But the troubles of my people did not rest so heavily upon me as did the sorrow of losing my wife.

"The women cut their hair and wailed in sorrow, and the men sang the song of death, and gathered our dead friends together to prepare them for the journey to the Happy Hunting Grounds. And while the rites of death were going on, I donned fresh paint; I filled my quiver with fresh arrows; I packed some dried meat in my pouch, and I started away to the south in the track of the Apaches, who had stolen all that the world held that was dear to me. At first the trail was clear, but after a day's journey I found that I must contend with the cunning of the Apaches, who are more cunning than serpents; for the trails seemed to divide and go in all directions. Then the trails seemed to disappear, and to fade from the ground. But I had tracked Apaches when I was but a boy, and I followed them as surely as though the way was an open road before me. They had gone with the speed of the wind, and I followed them over the mountains and across the deserts for many, many weary days. My feet bled from the rocks, my strength weakened; but I dragged myself along, determined to find them, to kill

my beloved wife so she could be in the other land to meet me, and then sell my life for as many Apache lives as I could get for it.

"I went by day and by night; and at last, in the dead time of a moonless night, I came within sight of the *rancheria* of the Apaches. O Chah-Now-Woof, sweet is revenge! When I saw the Apache encampment I forgot that I was weary, and was again a strong man and a chief. I crawled upon my hands and feet, gliding as silently as a serpent glides, and soon I was among the miserable tents of my foes. I went from one tent to another, listening; for I thought I would know my Zeetah even by her soft breath as she slept. At last I came to a tent larger than any of the others, and there I heard a sound that sent my heart into my mouth. It was the voice of Zeetah, who talked as she slept. I listened, and heard her say:

"'Lo-To-Kah, dear one, I have had an evil dream. I dreamed I was stolen from your side. O Lo-To-Kah, take me closer in your arms.'

"Then my eyes were wet with tears. I scratched upon the wall of the tent to awaken her, and soon I knew she was awake, for she spoke in fright. I whispered to her, telling

her I was Lo-To-Kah, and asking her to steal out to me if she were not bound. Soon she came, silently creeping to me, and I took her in my arms and kissed her as a mother might kiss a loved child who had come back to her from the grave. And then, as she was weak from so much fear and excitement, I took her in my arms and bore her away into the depths of the forest; and as I bore her I saw that she held some strange object in her hands.

"I am different from the men of my tribe, and I could not bear the thought of living with my wife after the great dishonor that had been put upon her; and I determined to live with her one night of bliss, and then to kill her, and then go to the *rancheria* of the Apaches and fight them as long as my life should last. Most of the men of my kind would have kept the woman, being glad to have her love at any price: but I loved her so much that I would rather have killed her than have her live, and remember dishonor.

"When we reached a safe place in the forest, I told Zeetah what I had determined to do, and then she showed me the dried body of the two-headed snake, and told me that while the battle had raged hottest a strange woman with a white skin had crept into our *can-nee*

and given her the emblem, and then faded as though she had gone up in smoke. Zeetah knew of the snake emblem, and she had carried it with her; and because she had borne it she had not been harmed, even though she was among the brute Apaches—those devils who are worse than the lowest brutes the gods have placed upon the earth. And when my wife told me she was free from disgrace, it was the happiest moment I have known in all the years of my life.

"Then Zeetah and I crept back to the camp of the Apaches, and we went to the tent where she had been a prisoner, which was the tent of the head chief. We crept inside, making no noise, and we found the chief still sleeping. Before he awoke a gag was in his mouth, and I threw him across my shoulder and bore him away into the forest, Zeetah following after me. It would have been no wrong thing to have killed him as one would kill a serpent; but when we were in the forest I unbound him. I placed his battle-club in his hands and told him to fight for his life, as he and I would never both go forth alive. The battle was fierce and short, but when it was done the Apaches lacked a chief.

"I knew it was Raymeya, the witch, who

had come to my *can-nee*, and given the charm to my wife, but I told my wife nothing of her. And one day after that I came home from a hunt and found my wife looking as though she had a trouble, and when I asked the cause she said that the strange white woman had come again, and had taken away with her the dried snake. Zeetah asked me if the woman were a mortal or a spirit, and I replied that I did not know. And I do not know unto this day.

"From that time on I did not see the witch again for many long years. My wife died, I tired of this land, and, as I have told you before, I learned the speech of the white-skinned people, and journeyed among them with a show. I went to many cities and many places, and in time our show crossed the ocean and went to the land called Europe.

"Never in all my life was I so lonely as I was on the day when we sailed away on the big ship, and set out into the heart of the ocean. Behind us was the great city, its towers and domes glittering in the sunlight, and before us was the expanse of the trackless sea. But the spell soon left me, for all the world had been lonely since I laid my Zeetah to rest in the ground in the shadow of the snow-topped mountains.

"We journeyed through the land of France and through the lands of Italy and Germany, and then we went to England. There the people went wild over us, and multitudes of them came every day to see the Indians. Deerfoot, the Seneca, was with us,—he who was in his time the mightiest and fleetest runner in the world.

"The English people numbered among them one who was a mighty runner, and he desired to try his speed with that of Deerfoot. The race was arranged to take place in a great arena, and on the appointed day a vast concourse of people assembled. The white man was a fleet runner, going with the speed of an antelope; but he was no match for Deerfoot, who sped away like the wind. Away they went, ten times around the great race-course, and Deerfoot won as easily as a coyote would win against a mongrel dog.

"The race set my blood to boiling, and I yearned to do something myself to show the white people that we children of the forests and plains were not their inferiors. I mounted the stand of their judges, and I challenged any white man there to wrestle with me for a stake of a thousand English pounds. The English people are famed for athletic skill;

and in that audience of people were the famed boxers and runners and wrestlers of the nation. My offer was taken at once, and soon there stepped into the arena a man who seemed to be stronger than the strongest horse. When he was stripped his muscles stood out on his body like the vines of the poison ivy stand out on the trunks of trees, and his hands seemed like vices. The people shouted, and said the match should take place at once; and I stripped off my outer garments and stepped to the side of the man. He shook my hand, according to the custom of the white nations, and at once we began the battle.

"Before I was aware, the man had grasped me, and he strove to throw me over his head and make short work of the match. But I am an Indian, and while he was striving with all his might I slipped through his iron hands and stood free upon the ground. Then, while he was gaping in wonder, I grasped him in such a way that he could scarce move either hand or foot. I raised him high above my head, I bore him half around the arena, and then I pitched him away from me, and he fell twenty feet from where I stood.

"The people went almost mad with excite-

ment; they pressed about me and shook my hand till I thought they would wring it loose from my arm—for I had thrown the greatest and strongest wrestler that had ever been known in England. Then a man who was a nobleman came to me, and he invited Deerfoot and me to go to his palace to a banquet that he would give in our honor.

"I cared little to go to the banquet of the great man, for such things are not to my taste. But my companions urged me, and I went. There were ladies at the banquet, many of them; all attired in rich robes, and with their white necks gleaming like ivory. Deerfoot and I donned the full dress of our tribes, and when the night was growing old I was called upon to make a speech. I stood up and talked to the white people, and much applause was bestowed upon me; but while I was speaking I glanced along the table and my speech stopped short, because I saw the two brightest eyes in the world gazing into mine. I knew the eyes were those of the witch, Raymeya, and I spoke no more, although the guests wondered much. And when I knew she was there the minutes seemed like days, and as soon as I could I hastened away.

"The next day the witch came to see me. She seemed as young as she did that day so long before, when she surprised me in the forests; but she seemed sadder and more gentle. She took my hand, and held it to her lips and kissed it, and then she asked me how life had gone with me since my wife had died, and asked if I were happy. I told her that life was good, but it was no longer so sweet to me as in those older days when I was chief among my own people in the mountains; and that most of the joy of my life had gone out with the breath of my wife. And then she said, almost in a whisper:

"'And you have not changed your mind concerning the matter of which I spoke to you in the forest?'

"I told her no; and for a long time she gazed mutely upon the ground. As she gazed upon the ground I regarded her, and never have the eyes of men looked upon a fairer being. In Europe I saw fine pictures of angels, and her features were like unto the features in the pictures. I was saddened, too, to think that such a creature was doomed to go childless and loveless through life, and in sorrow for her tears came to my eyes. I turned my head away, and when I turned

again the woman was gone. She had vanished, seemingly into thin air, just as she had done before.

"From that time on the witch was much in my mind, and many times in the night I woke to find that I had been dreaming of her. It seemed to me that in my sleep she came and stood by my couch, and gazed on me with her great bright eyes all filled with love; and she seemed to point to the west, as though bidding me to go again to the land of my own people. In time I went again to the land of my own people; I forsook the cities and the ways of the white-skinned races; I donned again the garments of my tribe, and I said to myself that with the people of my own blood I would spend the sundown of my life. I hunted with the young men of my tribe; I went to Moqui to the dance of the snakes; I journeyed among the tribes whose lands lie round about the lands of my own tribe. Many years slipped into the past, and I had come almost to forget that I had ever journeyed so much over the face of the earth. Like my people, I believe in magic; and many times I sat up far into the night listening to tales of the wonderful magic of the great Witch of the South. I held my peace, telling

no man that I knew her; and often I thought of the lost land in the Sierra Madres, of which she told me she was the queen, and of which she offered to make me king and ruler.

"In time the life of my people palled upon me. On every hand were the forts that held the white-skinned soldiers: no more rode our young men forth to battle; and when I was surfeited with weariness I chose a strong horse and set out alone to journey to the hidden valleys that lie locked fast in the Sierra Madres. I had many adventures on the journey: but of them I need not tell you as my tale is long without them. Among the Navajos and all the Pueblo tribes I was treated as a loved kinsman; among the Apaches I found that I was known, and when I entered a *rancheria* I would hear the old men say:

"'He who rides among us is Lo-To-Kah of the charmed life. He is mighty in magic and unconquerable in battle; treat him well, that he may pass on his way and leave us in peace.'

"And in time I came to lands that I had not seen since the days of my earliest manhood. Soon I was in an unknown land, and was journeying in the lands that belong to the fierce Yaquis. Some of them were hostile,

and at times it seemed that I must lay aside my weight of years and again do battle like a young warrior. But once, when the Yaquis closed about me in scowling groups, I stood up in my stirrups, and said:

"'I am Lo-To-Kah of the North, and my name may be known among you. I am on a journey of peace, and I care not to fight; but if I am not treated as a warrior and a chief, old as I am, I will fill some Yaqui graves. I journey to visit the land of Raymeya. Now let me pass, for I ask twice for nothing!'

"When I spoke the name of the witch the Indians looked upon me in awe, and they stood aside to let me pass. And then an old chief came forward and shook my hand, and told me he had heard of me in the time of long ago, when he and I were both warriors and were both young. And the Yaquis craved me to abide among them until they could honor me with a feast, but I hastened on my way.

"In time I came to a place where the valleys and mountain passes ceased, and then my way was up, up, up, toward the very crest of the frowning mountains. Soon I was at the timber line; then I came to the region where snow lies forever on the rocks; and then I

was in a region of snow and hail and storms, a desolate region never before trodden by the foot of man or beast. My horse died in that place, and I was almost minded to lie down and die. Yet hope was with me and I struggled on and on, sometimes falling into a chasm of snow, sometimes stopping to rub my frozen feet and hands, and then going onward and always up. At last, while stones of hail were almost knocking the breath from my body, I came suddenly to a wall of masonry, rising out of the snow sheer before me. I believed then that my reason was gone and that my mind was wandering in delirium, but I placed my hand on the wall and followed it. It was so high that I could not look over it; it was impenetrable, its massive side not being broken by a single opening of any kind. I followed it for many miles, going on long after the storm had ceased; and just as my strength was gone and I could go no farther, I came to a place where a ladder of rawhide was hanging to the wall. I grasped the ladder, and with my strength leaving me at every step, I painfully climbed to the top of the wall.

"Friend, the people of your kind believe in a land of Paradise—a land of joy where milk

and honey flow, and every grace is known. And I say to you that your land of Paradise can be no fairer than was the land that opened to my astonished view when I had reached the summit of that cruel wall. The mountain I was on seemed to be split in twain, and the wall was on the very crest of such a precipice as those that are seen in the Grand Cañon of the Colorado. A few feet below me was a roadway, cut out of living rock, which ran around the face of the cliff; and more than a mile below me was a laughing valley of rippling rivers and groves of trees, of golden cities and level lawns. Spires and minarets rose above the cities, lakes glistened in the sun, boats shot over the waters, and from all the valleys came up the incense of flowers and the smell of growing crops. And as I sat and gazed into the valley I knew it to be the land whose people called Raymeya queen, and I felt that the end of my journey was reached. That was the land of which I might have been king; those golden cities might have been mine; and my life might have been lived out in that wondrously beautiful valley, if it had not been for the love I bore for Zeetah. Then memories of Zeetah came crowding back to me; crowding back over the long, lonely,

vanished years that I had lived since she went from me. And as I mused of her and of her love for me, I gazed again into the valley, and felt that all its wonders and honors had been well lost.

"Then I climbed off the wall into the roadway of stone, and started down into the valley. Soon I was halted by a bronzed warrior, who carried a silver spear. In a tongue that I did not know he said words to me, and when I answered him in the Spanish speech he shook his head in perplexity, and gazed on me in wonder. But he answered me in the same tongue, and he lowered his spear and walked by my side, and together we went down the winding roadway that led into the valley. When we came to the level land we met men, women and children, and they all stopped and gazed on me, and asked questions of my guide. I was truly in a sorry state: my clothes were worn out, my hands and feet were frozen and swollen, and my face and body were covered with scratches and bruises. And thus, hungry, naked, penniless, and ill, I was led into that golden city of which I might have been the ruler. I was being led to a prison that was kept for such wandering Indians as found their way into the valley;

but as we were passing a palace of marble I saw the eyes of Raymeya gaze out from a window. At first she did not see me, but soon her eyes fell upon me, and then she called to the officer who was guiding me, telling him to stop. He stopped and stood mutely by my side; and soon another officer came, and ordered that I be taken before the queen. I was led through the palace-grounds into the apartment of the queen, and she rose from her place and ordered that I be left alone with her. When we were alone the queen knelt at my side; she took my hand in hers, and her eyes were aflame with joy. She said:

"'And have you come to me at last, O Lo-To-Kah? The time has been long; the years have passed on leaden feet; but I endured, because I believed that in time you would come.'

"I said to her: 'Raymeya, he who stands before you is an old man, whose days to live are few. I came to this place because I tired of the land of my own people; but I came to seek no bride. I have a bride who waits for me in a land as fair as is this land of yours.'

"Raymeya rose and looked upon me in sorrow; and she was not one day older than when she came to me in the depths of the

forest, or when I saw her in the greatest city of the world. The years had gone on, changing babes to men, and men back to earth; but the hand of time had not fallen on the fair face or form of the witch who was ever young.

"We seated ourselves and drank wine; and we talked for many hours, and when we were through talking, Raymeya was my friend, and she no longer craved my love. I told her all the tale of my journey through life. I told her that never could I love any woman but the one who had been my wife; and she said it was well, and that she would speak to me no more of love. Then she gazed into my face for a long time, her eyes filled with tears; and then she arose and walked up and down the room, moaning to herself. But soon she became quiet; she smiled, and laid her hand on my shoulder and called me friend; and from that time forth she spoke no more of love.

"I was tired and hungry, and the queen ordered attendants to bathe me, and to give me food and garments; and when I was dressed and had eaten, I lay down and slept for many hours.

"The next day I walked with the queen over the streets of her city, and wherever we

The Statue.

went the people bowed in reverence. The streets of the city were lined with beds of flowers; in the center were lawns of well-kept grass, and the houses were all of marble and fine stones, and the domes and spires and minarets were of beaten gold. Never in all my wanderings in the far lands of the earth had I seen anything so beautiful, and many times I asked of the queen, in wonder, how it had all come to be. But she smiled and told me to wait, and in good time she would tell me all the tale of her life. And I was content to wait, while we wandered on through the streets and plazas of that enchanted city. Soon we were tired, and as soon as the queen waved her hand a chariot drawn by four horses came to our side. We entered the chariot, and the queen ordered the driver to go to the Plaza of the Statues.

"The Plaza of the Statues was a circular place, hemmed in with palaces of marble, and in the place golden statues were scattered about, intermingled with statues carved in the purest white marble. In the centre was a colossal golden statue, towering above the others. It was of beaten gold, and when I gazed upon it I almost fainted with wonder, for the statue was of myself. It was myself,

as I was when a young man. The habiliments were those of my people, and a mighty war-club was in the hands.

"'That,' said the queen, pointing to the golden statue of myself, 'is the image of the king of this land—the king who never came to claim his own.'

"The eyes of the Queen filled with tears, and we drove in silence away from that place. That matter of the statue troubled me, and from the time I had seen it I yearned to leave that fair city, and go again to live out the remnant of my life in the rude land of my own people. And on the next day I said to the queen: 'O Raymeya, tell me now the tale of your life—the tale you promised me so long ago in the forests that cover the mountains of the La Platas. Let me know the truth of the mystery of your life, and your endless youth, and your changeless beauty; and then let me go out of your land and out of your life, and let me go back to the land where I was born. I am but a wild man, and I am out of place among the splendors of your royal city. You have a warm place in my heart; you seem at once my daughter and my friend, but it is best that I abide not here with you.'

"And the queen told me the tale of her life.

In the lodges of my people, when the wild mountain storms were howling, when the lightnings were flashing, and the thunders were shrieking among the mountain crags and forests, often have I sat and listened to strange, wild tales that were told by the story-tellers of my tribe; in the printed books of the white-skinned peoples I have read many tales so marvellous that they seemed untrue; but never in all the years of my life have I heard so strange a tale as that which was told to me in that luxurious palace, by the beautiful woman who was always young. I will not repeat to you all of her tale, for the night grows old; and, too, I fear at best you will think I speak to you in lies. But as plainly and as shortly as I can, I will repeat the tale that was told to me by Raymeya.

"Raymeya told me that she was born in Spain, before the time when Columbus sought the Western world. She was the daughter of a pirate, and in her early life she felt great remorse for the life that was lived by herself and her people, and she entered a convent as a nun. There she fell in love with a priest, and in order not to lay herself open to reproach, she stole away at night, and fled from the convent. At that time South America was the

haven for all men of adventurous spirits, and at the time she fled from the convent a fleet was fitting out to sail to that land to seek for a land of gold, whose fame had reached earlier explorers. She went to the admiral of the fleet, and begged that he would take her with him, and the admiral became enamored of her beauty, and begged of her to go as his wife. They were married before they sailed, and she landed on the western shores as a wife. In America the pioneers were wild over the tales of *El Dorado*, the Gilded Chief of the land of Cundinamarca—a man who was said to have so much gold that his house was built of it, and his body was powdered afresh each day with gold dust. Raymeya's husband set out to find that land, and his wife went with him. And after months of hardship they came to the plain of Cundinamarca, and they found only a village of seemingly wild Indians, who had no gold, and who fought like demons. And the Indians said there was no Gilded Chief.

"The land of Cundinamarca seemed to be full of curses for the Spaniards, and fevers and pestilences came upon them, and death abode in their camps by night and by day. Some made their way back to the seashore,

but many were too ill to move, and among those were the commander and his wife. When all but a few were dead, there came to their miserable camp the one whom they had sold their lives to find—the Golden King himself. When the aliens had entered his land, he had taken all but a few of his people and withdrawn to an almost inaccessible valley, and there they had hidden themselves and their wealth. But every day spies went to the valley and told of the ills that befell the white-skinned invaders. When the white men were so few that all danger was past, the king had gone forth to meet them; and no sooner had he come among them than his heart caught fire from love of Raymeya. The Inca professed great love for the Spaniards; he took them to his hidden city, and he studied their speech. And when he had learned to talk with them, he sought to win Raymeya for his bride. At first she refused, but he showed her his vast stores of gold and precious gems; and the woman was tempted, and she sold her honor for a price. The warriors of the Inca then fell upon the Spaniards and killed all but the commander; and with her own hands Raymeya slew her husband that she might be free from him, and free to wed the Golden Chief.

"Raymeya told me that in the gray dawn of the next morning after she had killed her husband, while she was lying with staring, sleepless eyes by the side of the sleeping Inca, the miracle took place that in South America is still remembered, and is called the miracle of Our Lady of the Wilderness. The apparition of an angel formed before the eyes of Raymeya, the angel's hands were pointed at her, and then these words were said:

"'O sinner, viler than the work of a fiend has been your deed this night! To gain wealth and place you have taken human life, and the soul of your victim is now in Purgatory. Until that soul is freed, you shall not grow old, and the passing of time shall harm you not; but you shall be denied the blessing of death. And you shall wander over the earth, seeking something you shall not find, and bearing the memory of this time with you forever!'

"Thus it is that Raymeya is ever young and ever fair; thus it is that she wanders over the earth, seeking love and finding it not; thus it is that she is the most unhappy woman who breathes the sweet air that the Great Spirits have given to the children of men.

"In time the Inca died. During the long,

almost countless years that have been from then till now, Raymeya gained wisdom and the wealth that is now hers. Long ago she found the hidden valley in the Sierra Madres, occupied then by a tribe as wild as the Yaquis. Because they could not kill her they made her their queen; and she wrought with them and their children, and the children of their children's children, until the result is that her people are a wise and learned people, who dwell in a golden city in the fairest valley upon the earth. She has taught her people all things except knowledge of the world; but she never allows them to journey beyond the mountains that shut in their valley. She herself wanders up and down the earth, appearing sometimes in a wild camp, disguised as an Indian woman; then going as a great lady in the courts of kings, and sometimes going as a nun to nurse the dying when the great wars are raging. But all the time she bears in her bosom a heart that is on fire, and joy is a thing that is not known to her."

Lo-To-Kah abruptly ceased speaking; he rolled a corn-husk cigarette and lighted it, and then he walked up and down the room and smoked, his head bent low in thought. When

he had finished smoking he sat down again and began talking. He said:

"Friend, when you think of all the blessings the Great Spirits have given to us of earth, remember that the greatest of all is death. It is the end of trouble, the ceasing forever of evil-doing. It will come to me soon, and may come to you also at any time; for a man's life is but as a breath of air. My mind now is often filled with thoughts of a fair land that I soon shall journey in; a land as fair as the land where Raymeya rules, but a land where no one's heart is like a stinging adder."

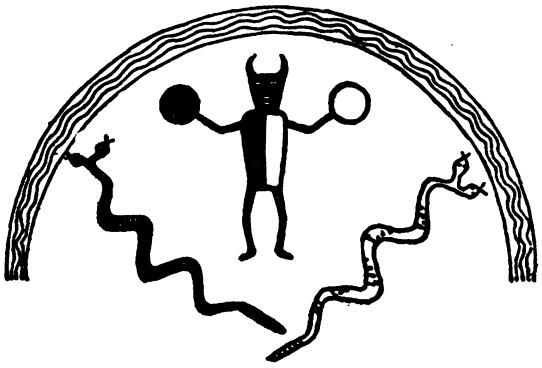
The old man spread his blanket on the floor, and it was not long till I also slept, for the night was almost gone.

In the morning I studied the old Indian with a new interest. He had travelled so far and wide, he was so much wiser than the men of his race, that it seemed strange that he should believe such strange, weird tales as the one he had told me the night before. I hoped he would speak further about the witch; but he did not mention her, and seemed to forget that he had spoken of her, or that such a person lived. He told me old tales of the long ago; he described the "outfits" that used to journey down the trail to Santa Fé before

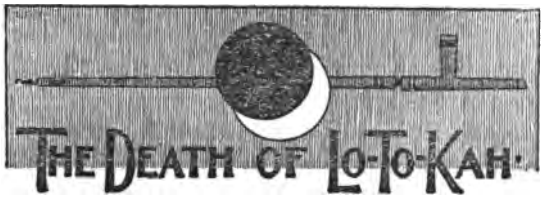
the railroads were built, and he discussed the various army officers who had fought in the West. The day was hot, and I slept an hour after noon. When I awoke and went outside, I found the old chief on his pony, waiting to bid me farewell. He said:

"Being in this place has brought to my memory other places where the Pueblo peoples dwell, and has made me long to see some of these places again before I die. I want once more to ride up the trail, lined with wild plum trees, that leads to the tall houses of Taos. Once more I desire to rest under the giant *alamos* that grow in the bare plaza at San Ildefonso. Once more I desire to journey over the barren lands that lie round about Picuris, and to visit friends of mine who dwell in Tesuque. I long to look again upon the great rock of Acoma, and then I desire to journey to San Juan where are sacred pictures of Po-so-yemmo the God of Water, and where a priest who is my friend has concealed in his house the sacred snakes that are cherished and worshipped from one year to another. To see all these places requires a long journey and time is now my scantest possession, so I must say farewell and be on my way. I hope to meet with you again soon; but if I do not see

you until after we have both taken the four days' journey across the bad lands that lie between life and the Happy Hunting Grounds remember that old Lo-To-Kah the Ute counts you as much his friend at though your skin was red or his was white. *Adios!*"



THE DEATH OF LO-TO-KAH.



FOR several days the Indians had been congregating in the valley of the Rio de los Pinos to celebrate the great annual bear-dance. First the little grove of tall cottonwoods was filled with tents; then numerous wreaths of smoke were to be seen rising from the crest of the mesa on the west, and then tents, apparently springing from the ground, lined the river bank for almost a mile. The *ah-vick-wock-et*, or corral of evergreen boughs, in which the dance was to be held, had been in readiness for several days: the bands of singers had learned their songs by long practice, the women had prepared a plentiful supply of *moratches*, or "singing-sticks," and all was in

readiness for the ceremonies and festivities. But friends who had not seen each other for a year were desirous of visiting before the four-days' dance began: hunters had come in who had skins and pelts to barter or to wager on their luck at the game of *kan-yu-te*, and the chiefs postponed the opening of the dance from day to day in order that all might have time to race and visit and gamble to their full content. The camp and the green enclosure and the groups of gayly-clad Indians all went to make up a picturesque sight. Here would be seen a solitary Brave, his blanket wrapped to his eyes, standing apart in silent dignity; there would be seen a group of boys playing *kan-yu-te* with beads as stakes; and over the mesa could be seen an incoming caravan of a dozen riders, moving in single file, the tents fastened to poles that were strapped to the horses of the women. I watched the sights all day, wandering from tent to tent and from group to group. The day before I had spent with Lo-To-Kah, but on this morning a young Indian had come to me and said that the old man was sick; that famed *pwu-au-guts*, or medicine-men, were going to make a great chant over him; and that no visitor, friend or foe, could see the old warrior that day.

As the sun went down that evening I stood at the entrance to the tent of one of my friends and gazed over the camp as it lay radiant in the light of the slanting sun-rays. Tents that had been a dirty yellow by day now took on a golden hue; the white tents seemed pink, and even the brown tents were tinged with the rare, mellow light of the sunset. Soon the sun sank behind the white walls of the towering La Plata Mountains, and then wreaths of smoke could be seen ascending from a hundred *can-nees*—the name by which those people call their tents. Soon it was dark, and all that could be heard was the crooning of the *moratchales* as they practised the songs for the morrow. Just as I was going within the tent, I saw a bright light flare up in a small *can-nee* that stood apart from the others. The light shone so brightly that at first it seemed that the tent must be on fire, and the figures within it were sharply silhouetted against the canvas. I started to walk to this tent, and as I drew near there came from it the weirdest, most uncanny wail that I ever heard. It seemed like the sound of three or four voices, rising and falling in unison. First there was a wail, long, quavering and weird, that might have been the despairing cry of a lost soul;

then a short, almost painful, pause; and then the weird notes again, sinking lower and lower, until they seemed to go down, with a quavering cadence, into the earth. Then again came the high, uncanny wail, and I knew it was the chant of the *pwu-au-guts*, who were "making medicine" over Lo-To-Kah, and I feared that my friend must be very ill. As I approached the tent I was stopped by a tall, bronzed figure that stood in silence a few feet from the entry, and a sharp lance was lowered to a level with my breast. It was a guard,—one of those who always stand watch over a medicine-tent when ceremonies of supreme importance are being performed. The guard looked at me closely, for the night was dark, and then he lowered his spear and said:

"Is it you, friend of mine? I knew you not in the darkness, for I am growing old and my eyes have lost much of their keenness. But I cannot allow even you to go nearer—no, not if you were one of our own chiefs. Sacred *po-o-kan-te* is being made over the old man, Lo-To-Kah, and no man can now go to him unless by his own earnest wish. I fear the time of Lo-To-Kah has almost come to an end, and that even the great *pwu-au-guts* who are with him cannot lengthen his stay among

The guard and the medicine tent.

the people of the earth. And now good-night for we must not converse here."

I turned to walk away, my heart heavy with sadness because of the sickness of the oaken-hearted old man who lay within that dreary tent with a lot of half-naked savages crooning mummery over him. I should have liked to send for a white physician; but I knew that even Lo-To-Kah had little faith in the efficiency of white men's medicine; and then, too, it would have been a dangerous place for a physician in case the old man died, for the Indians would almost surely have accused him of witchery. I retired and slept till midnight, when I was called by a young Indian, who entered my tent without ceremony and shook me.

"Arise," said he, "and go with me to the medicine *can-nee*, where lies Lo-To-Kah. The evil witches have had the old man's brain since the sun went down, and he has talked only of things that were before you or I were born, and he has not known the men who were with him this night. But his brain is now clear, and he has sent for you. Come, let us go."

It was the moonless time of the night, and all objects were shrouded in sombre blackness.

The lights from the fires had gone out in all but the medicine-tent, and even that burned faintly. As we came to the *can-nee* the guard stood mute as we passed him, and when we entered, the medicine-men ceased chanting and sat down on the ground, which served as floor. There was nothing in the tent but the fire in the center, and a heap of furs upon which the old man lay. He was only half-dressed; his skin leggings and moccasins were on, but in his frenzy he had torn his cloth shirt almost to shreds. Then I knew how sick Lo-To-Kah was, and I feared that he might never see another sunrise. He raised himself upon his elbow and looked straight at me; it was evident, however, that he was delirious and did not see me. Half-rising he clenched his hand and said:

"Oh, fools! false makers of medicine; idiotic singers in the wind! why do you not send for my friend? Am I so old and so weak and of so little account that I must lie impotent upon my back and be ruled by whimpering coyotes like you? Bring my friend, I say; or, old as I am, I will make you quiver under the weight of my hand!"

I took the old man's hand, and at once he knew me. He took my hand in both his

wrinkled, wasted palms; he closed his fingers tightly over my own, and then closed his eyes wearily and lay back upon his couch. Presently, he opened his eyes and said:

"Forgive me, O medicine-men, for my anger. I am old and sick and my temper is like the temper of a hag; but I mean you no ill, and I crave your pardon."

Then, still holding my hand, he once more closed his eyes and lay back upon his couch of furs. It was easy to see that he had suffered greatly. There was blood on his palms, where he had dug his finger-nails in paroxysms of pain; there were streaks under his eyes, that showed darkly against even his dark skin, and a slight clammy perspiration had broken out on his forehead. He held my hand limply, and there seemed no more strength in his grip than there would be in the grasp of a child. It was truly a sad sight to see that iron-hearted old man—that old Indian who had been a human lion, fierce, yet noble—going weakly and painfully down to his death. Time was when his strength had been as the strength of a giant, when his prowess was so terrible that it had been heralded to the ends of the world that the Indians knew, and when his name was feared from the frozen North to the wilder-

nesses of the unexplored Sierra Madre Mountains. His life had been long, reaching almost to eighty years, and his name had become old in Indian tales of battle. Lo-To-Kah it was who had fought a tribe of Navajos single-handed, and had come out victor; it was he who had fought a grizzly bear, hand-to-hand, to save the child of a thieving Mexican who had robbed him; it was he who was both admired and feared by the frontier soldiers of fifty years ago; it was he who in the heat of battle, when sorely put upon and disarmed, had torn up a sapling by the roots and smitten his enemies to death with the ponderous weapon; and it was he who had journeyed more and farther in strange lands than any Indian of any tribe except old Deerfoot, the Seneca,—hale old Deerfoot, who is wandering yet!

Lo-To-Kah was an Indian who had kept pace to the fullest degree with the changes in the destinies of his people; who had learned the customs, the languages, and even something of the literature of the white-skinned hordes who had overrun the ancestral lands of his people as the locusts overran Egypt. But he was ever an Indian, and he was dying the death of an Indian;—not a death in battle,

stripped to the skin for the fray and with the scalps of hated rivals hanging to his leathern belt, but as an old Indian who had outrun fate and outwitted the spirits of war should die —in an Indian *can-nee*, surrounded by the *shamans* and priests of his people who made *po-o-kan-te*, or magic, that was to clear the way of the undaunted old man's spirit to the abodes of the blest in the bright hunting-grounds where there is no evil.

The flower of the civilization of America and of Europe had been seen by Lo-To-Kah. Great men of the Anglo-Saxon and Latin races had received him as an equal and had been glad to call him friend; wealth had come to him only to be wasted; but in his old age he had yearned again for the bare, brown plains and the white-crowned mountains of the land of his youth, and he had gone back to his own people. And now his tale of life was almost told, and I was the only man of an alien race who was near to write the end to the last sad chapter.

After lying still and silent for a few minutes, the old man awoke with a start and almost leaped to his feet. His mouth twitched and his eyes rolled, and it was easy to see that he was again delirious. Rising to his feet,—a

thing which I did not think he had the strength to do,—he shaded his eyes with his hand and peered away as though he were scanning a plain or a wide stretch of country, although in reality he could not have seen farther than the side of the tent. As he gazed, every muscle of his body became tense, every vestige of weakness seemed to leave him, and it seemed that he was a strong man again. It was easy to see that in imagination he was living over some long-past episode in his life. Suddenly, he waved his hand in the air and shouted:

"Ho, warriors, the Comanches are coming! Look! Do you not see them on the crest of the mesa—ten of them to every one of us? Lasso your horses, look to the strings of your bows, and let us meet them before they can come upon us! *Oh, la-ay-lilla-ho!*"—shouting his war-cry in a loud, clear tone that echoed throughout the length of the sleeping camp.

Some sleeping Indian who had been dreaming of war heard the old man's battle-cry, and soon an answering *Oh, la-ay-lilla-ho!* was heard from the other end of the encampment. As its echoes reached the old man's ears it seemed to rouse him; his eyes lost their vacant stare, but his weakness again coming upon him,

he almost fell. I supported him, and as he lay down again he said:

"Again was my mind running wild, O friend! Again was I in thoughts a young man, and again was I making ready for battle with the Comanches. It was only delirium, but ah! it was sweet to be in imagination a strong young man again—to be at the head of my steel-hearted warriors, and to be galloping over the dry mesas to try our strength against the strength of our hated foes! But that is past; I am now but an old man, and the coldness of death is fast chilling my blood and stealing within me to freeze my heart. Death! Death! Death!—the thing the white men fear so much; the thing the red men fear so little! But it has come to me none too late. All my life I have tasted to the full of the joys of living. My foes have fallen before me as the oak trees fall before the mountain storm; my friends have loved me, and have given me joy as the flowers give joy to the birds of summer; and my wife—ah! she was to me as a spring of sweet water down until the time of her death."

The old, dim eyes closed again, the thin palms held my hand closer, and then the old man raised his head with a start, and said:

"Dead? Dead? Who says that my Zeetah is dead? If she is dead it is by the foul work of a cowardly coyote who is my enemy, and I will seek him till the flesh rots from my bones, and when I do find him I will roast him over a slow fire, I will prick out his eyes with the needles of cactus, I will—Oh, you lie, you lie! You are a race of liars and men with the tongues of snakes; for Zeetah is not dead—she cannot be dead!" Then his voice became low and soft, and he said: "O Zeetah, *neenah pagosa*,[1] they told me you were dead. It was a dream, sweet wife of my heart, but it has sorely troubled your Lo-To-Kah. Hold my hand, sweet wife, that I may know you are here!"

Again the old man was silent for a little time, and when he spoke again he was rational. He said:

"Friend of mine, again has my mind wandered like a vagrant bird. Again have I been living in thought the old days of my young years—those glad old days that have been gone from me, for lo! these many moons. Again was I a young man, a warrior and a hunter; and again was Zeetah, the bride of my youth, in my arms. But it will now be

[1] Wife of mine.

only the time needed for a few breaths when I will be with her again. For more than thirty years she has been waiting for me in the bright hunting-grounds that lie beyond the mystery called death; yet I think that even in that glad place she has not been happy, because I have not been with her. As I lie here on my couch of death, the scenes of my life come before me in a succession of pictures; all the wars, the battles, the combats, the hunts, the dances, the wanderings, the strange peoples and the far places that I have visited, come again before my eyes in memory; but of them all the brightest and best are the memories of Zeetah—she who was my only wife. Ah, friend! I have journeyed to the great places of the world; I have seen the kings before whom men bow the knee; I have seen the wondrous cities of the white-skinned peoples: but of all the things I have seen none were so beautiful to me as the bare plains and the high mountains of the land where I loved and won my Zeetah. I have seen vast cities, where the houses were palaces; where the wealth of a nation was garnered in a single room. But all the time I was gazing and wondering at the greatness of the white peoples, my heart was here in the

cañons, and in my mind I was again chasing the wild buffalo and deer across the dry *arroyos*. Ah, to be young again—to be young again! Why, there was a time when my strength was like the strength of a rod of iron; there was a time when I could catch one wild horse after another and ride them till in turn they died. And when my hand was turned in war against my enemies, then went forth the saying that many graves would yawn to hold those slain by Lo-To-Kah."

The old man ceased talking. Again his weird, wild war-cry was heard reverberating in the night, and we who were watching him knew that he was again in the hold of the delirium and was fighting over some battle of his far-away youth. I noticed that his strength was failing, and it seemed to me that he would not again regain the use of his reasoning faculties; but after muttering and raving for a time he became rational. He sat up on his couch and told me of a fight he had fought when he was young, telling his story with a directness and connection that would not have been looked for from a dying man. I give the story here in his own words; but I cannot give the magnificent gestures, nor the wonderful expression of his matchless eyes, which were bright and

sparkling despite the dimness of old age. He said:

"One time after Zeetah had been my wife for two summers I killed buffalo, tanned the skin, and builded my wife a new *can-nee*. It was the finest and largest *can-nee* that was owned by any of the people of our tribe, and Zeetah was very proud of it. Within it we hung the scalps and trophies I had won in battles; we adorned the sides with the claws of bears I had killed, and I thought we had all the things needed by happy people. But one day Zeetah said to me that she had heard a tale setting forth that the Modocs who dwelt in the lava-lands of the far North made bows that were as wide as the oars of boats, and that none but the strongest men could bend them. She said she wished to possess one of those bows, so that I might bend it, and show the other men of our tribe that I was the strongest and mightiest of them all, and so that she might have it to hang on the walls of our *can-nee*. I was but a youth then,—any wandering fancy possessed my mind as much as great thoughts or ambitions did in my later years,—and I told Zeetah I would journey to the land of the Modocs and bring her the strongest bow they had. She besought me

not to go, saying she had spoken only in jest; but the drop of wandering blood that was in my body was more potent than her pleadings, and I set out alone for the land of the Modocs.

"I passed through the lands of many tribes, meeting some in friendship and fighting any who cast gibes upon me, and at last I came unhurt to the land of the Modocs. The Modocs dwelt in a wild land—a land that seemed fit for none but evil spirits,—and I said to myself that I would tarry there but a short time. I asked of them what man among them owned the greatest bow, and they answered me only by asking questions of me and looking upon me in suspicion. I learned that the greatest bow among them was esteemed to be a thing of magic, and was greatly prized by them. They believed I wanted to work evil upon them by obtaining it; but I had promised that bow to my Zeetah, and I vowed that I would take it, or that I would never leave the land of the Modocs alive.

"After I had parleyed much with the Modocs, striving to obtain the bow by fair traffic, one of their chiefs bade me leave their country. I was no thief; I desired not their horses nor their women, and the order was an insult that

I would not brook. By way of answer to the order of the chief I spat upon him, and we fought—I and the chief and his men. We fought for an hour; and then the tribe of the Modocs lacked one of its chiefs, and two of the warriors were maimed. One of the men with whom I had fought then said that their great bow was owned by a man who was at once chief and priest, and that, though he fought but seldom, he was greater in battle than any man who had ever lived. Then I told the man to bear my defiance to that chief, and to tell him he was a liar and a coward and an eater of the flesh of dogs, and that I was waiting for him in his own land to fight him. The man bore my message to the chief, and the chief wondered much whom I might be, who came to his land from so far to fight him. The chief came to meet me, but he came hiding and skulking like a coward—not as a boasting chief should go forth in his own land to fight a single stranger. When he came near to me he drew the string of his great bow, and I felt an arrow pass through the flesh of my arm. Then the passion of war seized me. I forgot that I was a single man in the land of a tribe of enemies, and I rushed toward the tree from behind which the chief had shot. My

rush was so swift that I reached him before he could shoot another arrow, and behind him I saw ten of his people hiding behind rocks. With the swiftness of a flash of lightning I grasped the chief by the throat with one of my hands; with my other I wrested his great bow from him and threw it to the ground, and then I swung him over my shoulder and reached the tall tree from behind which he had shot. The tree grew upon the bank of a great precipice, and when I reached it, I whirled the body of the chief thrice around my head, and I threw him far out over the bank, sounding the great war-cry of my people as I threw him. He fell upon the rocks at the bottom of the chasm: a shriek came from his coward lips, and then his voice was still forever. I hurried then to where the men were standing gaping in the wonder of fools. Before they could stop me I gained the bow that the chief had owned. It was a wondrous bow—longer by far than a man; as thick as a man's foot, as wide as the wing of a wild goose, and its string was made of a great coil of sinew that was as hard and strong as a rope of steel. I felt my spirit leap with joy as I took up the bow, and I fitted one of the great arrows to it and sent it singing through the heart of a Modoc fool

who had not known enough to shoot me when I was struggling with the chief. The man fell dead, and then the madness of war grew upon me. In the sight of my eyes all things seemed red as blood, and I forgot danger, I forgot all but the joy of killing, and I rushed upon the remaining men as a mountain-lion might rush upon a flock of rabbits. They were brave men, though, those Modocs, and they stood their ground and fought me hand to hand. Soon we were so close to each other that I could not use my bow, and then we all fought with only our war-clubs as weapons. My club was heavy with flint, and I swung it so fast that it made a noise like a chant as it sped through the air. A mighty swing, and a Modoc fell dead; another swing,—swift as forked lightning,—and then another man was ready for the scalping-knife; and then a giant Modoc smote me with his club and broke my left arm; then the blood of my body turned to a white heat, and, with my broken arm hanging limply at my side, I rushed upon the others and one by one they fell before me; but as they were falling the giant rained his heavy blows upon me, giving me scars that I have carried down through my life to this day. In due time I killed or wounded all but the man

who was the giant, and he was not even hurt. I was bleeding from a dozen wounds: one of my eyes was closed from a blow he had given me; my left arm felt as though it were being pierced by knives, and the tall warrior rushed upon me, thinking to finish me. We both dropped our clubs and grasped each other's bodies, I having only one arm to use. The giant's arms closed about me—strong, strong: so strong that I thought my body would be divided into two pieces; but I grasped him with my one good arm, and I tried to push him from me. Then his hands of steel found their way to my throat; things began to turn black before my eyes, and I felt that the sun of my life was almost set. I thought of Zeetah in her *can-nee*, waiting my return; I thought of the men of my tribe, who might think I had deserted them to cast in my lot with another people; I thought of the joys of life—of the years my life yet lacked to fill it out to the number allotted to men; and the thought came to me that death was very bitter. I determined to make the man die with me, and it occurred to me that I might make one mighty rush and carry him with me over the edge of the precipice. I braced one of my feet against a stone; I threw all the strength of my body

"The old man fell forward."

into one mighty effort, and I rushed toward the cliff—the man giving way inch by inch before the strength I was using. When he began to give way, hope came again to my heart, and I believed that I might kill him and yet not lose my life. I grasped him about the neck and choked him, and he loosed his hold on my throat for an instant. That instant was his death; for no sooner had his hand come before my mouth than I bit it in my teeth, and while he recoiled in pain I threw all my power against him. Before he knew it, his body was soaring like the body of a bird down toward the bottom of the almost bottomless chasm. And the great bow that I won that day was ever after the dearest treasure that my wife possessed. But these are things of the long ago, and should not be dwelt upon by an old man who is face to face with death."

Once more shouting his once terrible war cry, the old man fell back from weakness. He lay for a long time,—perhaps an hour,—without speaking, and it seemed that all his strength was gone. In time he asked for water, and then again he lay silent while the hideous old medicine-men motioned their skinny arms over his body, placed their cheeks to his naked breast, and chanted the weird

death-song that was believed to clear the way for the dying man's soul to travel on its journey to the next world.

Just as the first thin ray of the morning sunlight came stealing over the eastern mesas, the old man sprang to his feet, turned his face upward, held out his arms, and said:

"O Zeetah, *neenah pagosa* at last, at last! I am coming, Zeetah, after long years! I am coming, and never will I depart from your side again—never, in the long forever. O Zeetah, the time has been long—so long, so long! I have lived a long life in a world full of trouble, and few besides you have had a place in my heart. None but you have been in my memory by night and by day, and none but you could make the place of endless joy a happy place to me. *Neenah pagosa*, I come at last!"

The old man fell forward on his face, his arms still outstretched before him. We thought at first he had fallen from weakness; but when we raised him and looked into his face, we saw that he was dead. And in all the weird, strange lands where the Indians dwell, never again will be known another such man as was old Lo-To-Kah of the oaken heart.

THE VISION OF THE WITCH.

ABOUT sixteen miles north of the Arkansas River, in Otero County, Colorado, there is a place called Antelope Springs. It is not a town, or a farm, or a ranch ; it is simply a place. It is ten miles or more from civilization, and is the centre of a vast treeless, unfenced plain that is used only for range for cattle. Here the plains break away from a mesa-wall, and out of the wall or slope there comes forth the water of a group of springs. This is the only water for miles, and the spot has long been known to Indians and hunters, as well as to the antelope, many of which still range in the region. It is a desolate place to those who

are lonely when out of sight of the towers and crowds of cities; but it is beautiful in the way that the sea or the forests are beautiful. The plains stretch away in undulating vastness in every direction, and nothing can be seen except the cattle and the wild animals that come to the springs to water. And at that place there occurred a thing so strange that the people who hear of it will say it is not true.

A traveller on horseback came one evening at sunset to the Antelope Springs. He was tired, hungry, and thirsty; but he carried food with him, the springs afforded water, and he decided to spend the night there. There is an old, tumble-down adobe corral at the springs that was once used by sheep-herders. The traveller picketed his horse out to eat the gramma-grass that grows quite abundantly there, and made a rude camp in the old ruin. He ate of the frugal lunch he carried with him, and then, with his saddle for a pillow and his overcoat for a covering, he lay down and slept.

The traveller did not know how long he had slept, but when he awoke it must have been far in the night. He looked out over the plains and saw the late moon rising over the earth, half obscured by floating clouds.

He heard the hoot of an owl; some creeping thing moved near him; and away over the empty distance he heard the weird, ghostly cry of the ravening coyotes as they wandered forth in search of prey. He shivered and was about to lie down again, when he chanced to glance to the eastward, and there, just where the old sheep-dip tank now lies, he saw a tent and a camp-fire, and some horses grazing near his own.

The traveller arose and went to the tent, for in that uninhabited place he felt that whoever might be the owners of the camp, would be glad to see him. Sitting in front of the tent was a black man, an African, of gigantic size. His lips were compressed, his face was free from hair, and his eyes shone in the night like coals of living fire. He stared at the traveller, but did not speak or move. The traveller addressed him, and the black man frowned, but did not answer. The traveller was turning to leave his churlish neighbor, when the flap of the tent was opened and a beautiful woman invited him to enter. The negro arose and stood to one side, the traveller entered the tent; and when he was within he believed that he was still asleep and dreaming, so different were his surroundings

from what he would expect to see in that isolated and desolate solitude. The tent was made of fine silk, the ground was covered with rugs of the finest patterns, and silken and golden draperies were all around. Standing at one side of the tent was a woman, more beautiful than any woman the stranger had ever seen before—which is not to be wondered at, for she was the most beautiful woman in the world. Her eyes were blue and as bright as stars; her features were finely molded; her dress was a robe of clinging silk, which half revealed and half hid the fair proportions of the wearer; and the undulations of her bosom caused her robe to rise and fall with a gentle motion. Diamonds of rare brilliance were on her fingers, a diamond bracelet encircled her wrist, and her soft hair was held back by a circlet of gold. The traveller gazed upon her with such a look as might have been on the face of a slain Saracen when first he saw one of the immortal houris of Paradise.

"Traveller, you are welcome," said the woman, in a voice so sweet that every tone of it is yet remembered by the traveller. "You are welcome, and I am glad you are here, for I am lonely. When we came to this place

and saw you asleep within the old adobe walls, my attendant desired to hasten away; but I would not go, for something seemed to tell me I must camp here. Is it not strange how we will be guided by impressions?"

The woman smiled into the face of the man, and her smile was so brilliant and she was so entrancingly beautiful, that he forgot to answer, but stood gaping at her as a clown might gaze at an angel.

"Will you not have wine?" asked the woman.

The traveller acquiesced, and the woman called her attendant, who had been sitting silently outside. The negro went to a leathern bag, and procured a bottle of wine. It was such wine as he had never drunk before; it seemed to go into his veins and take many years from his age, and make him young.

"Is not the wine splendid?" said the woman. "It was made in Spain three hundred years ago, and it has no peer in the world."

Three hundred years ago! Made in Spain! And these strange announcements made by a woman as beautiful as a dream—a woman who had a black king for a slave, and who dwelt in a silken tent and wore jewels beyond price! The traveller believed that he was asleep.

But if he were asleep indeed, he was having a beautiful dream, and did not desire to awaken.

Silken cushions were all about the tent, and after a time the traveller sat down. The woman talked to him for a time of the country they were in, of books, of pictures and of cities; and after they had begun to get well enough acquainted for the traveller to feel at ease, the woman asked him if he had lived long in the West.

"Many years," replied the traveller.

"Do you ever go among the Indians?" asked the woman.

"Yes."

"Did you ever meet an Indian named Lo-To-Kah—an old man who was once a chief, and who is now dead?"

"Yes, I knew him well; he was my friend," replied the traveller.

"He was your friend, and he is now dead," absently said the woman.

Then she roused herself and asked the traveller many questions of the old chief. The traveller answered as well as he could, but it was hard to keep his mind upon the subject; for his greedy eyes were always roving from the fair face to the perfect form of the woman who sat before him.

The night wore on, and in time the traveller arose and said he must go to his saddle and sleep.

"Remain here," said the woman. "My attendant will not sleep, but will guard me and the tent. It is not good for a man to sleep out of doors in the night. Lie down on the cushions and sleep here."

The man lay down upon the cushions, and the woman sat staring at the wall of the tent, seeming to forget her guest altogether. A man who is tired cannot remain awake always, even to stare at a beautiful woman, and in time the traveller fell asleep. He was awakened after a time, and rose to a sitting posture and looked about him. He saw the strange woman sitting with staring eyes gazing into vacancy, and the tall negro was in the tent with a look of terror on his face.

"What is it?" asked the traveller, speaking in a whisper.

"I cannot tell," answered the negro, also in a whisper. "I cannot tell. My mistress, the Queen, often prays for death, and I feel that at last it may be coming to her. She was never thus before."

The talking did not disturb the woman, who

sat rigid as a stone gazing with wide, unseeing eyes into nothingness.

"Who is your mistress?" whispered the traveller.

"Raymeya, Queen of——" began the negro. Then he paused; his big eyes flashed upon the traveller, and he said: "Fool! what concern of yours is it who she is? Is it not enough that a clod like you can gaze upon her? Now speak to me no more!"

A gust of cold air seemed to enter the tent, a white mist seemed for a moment to envelop all things; and when it had faded a bearded man stood before Raymeya, and the negro was cowering on the ground, his eyes rolling in terror. The bearded man seemed half shadowy and unreal, and the traveller believed it was a ghost. The woman gazed at it and screamed; but she did not cower, and she made no attempt to go away. She was silent for a full minute; then she spoke one word:

"Ransoval!"

"Aye, Ransoval!" said the apparition, "I am Ransoval, whom you foully slew so long ago in the accursed land of Cundinamarca. How long ago that was I know not; but I know that since then your memory has not been in my brain, and that I have not even

hated you, and do not hate you, for my murder. I seem like a man who has just awakened from a long sleep, my mind is not fully clear. What do you here? Why are you not dead?"

"I am not dead, O Ransoval, because of the curse that was placed upon me for my sin in taking your life. Long years—long and weary years—I have lived upon the earth since you ceased to live. Great wealth has been given me; great knowledge is mine; I am as fair as any woman who dwells in all the world; I am as young as I was when first I became your bride, but my heart is ashes, and I am the most unhappy of all the creatures that were created. Will you not forgive me for so foully murdering you?"

The thing seemed to start, and the eyes looked down at the woman. "Forgive you!" he said. "Why, you are my wife—my young lover, my bride! You are to me the sunlight of life, the sweet flower of existence! Forgive! What is there to forgive?"

The woman was grovelling upon the ground, moaning and crying. "Why," she said, "it was a sin to kill you. I cut you off in the bloom of youth, in the flower of your young manhood, and sent you, all unprepared, into that

country of judgment where none should go but those whose work upon earth is done."

"Yes; I know," said the man, or thing, or spirit, absently. "I know; I was thinking of other things. I had forgotten for an instant that you killed me."

"And had you forgotten that you loved me?" asked the woman, rising to her knees. "Had you forgotten that once I was all the world to you; that you swore you would surrender your hope of heaven for me?"

"No, I had not forgotten," said the shade.

The spirit stood with bowed head for a little time, and then it spoke again, saying:

"Raymeya, but for the blow you dealt me, the history of the world might have been changed. The expedition I led to South America was a contraband expedition, sailing without authority of any kind. I stole away from Spain in the night, and no man ever knew what befell me and the men I led. From a sailor who had been with Columbus I learned of the Gilded Chief, and I resolved to find him—to learn of the vastness of his wealth, and to then go the monarchs and disclose my discovery. Because of my death I could not make my great discovery known; and in after years, when the power of Spain was waning

because of the poverty of the nation, the gold of the Gilded Chief would have enabled the Spanish crown to almost conquer the world. No man after me sought the Gilded One until many years had gone into the past, and when they sought they found him not; for he had gone from his country; his wealth was gone with him, and his name and fame became a mocking and a byword. I know not how I know these things, but I know them."

"Is it the wealth of him who was called the Gilded One that you have in our valley?" tremulously asked the cowering negro, crawling nearer to his mistress.

The woman paid no heed to the black man, but sat staring at the wraith that was before her; and in the twinkling of an eye the shade was gone, and the room contained no person save the beautiful woman, the negro and the astonished traveller.

The woman sat like one bewitched, her great starry eyes distended and gazing into vacancy; and no one of the little company spoke a word. Soon a mist seemed to enter the room again; the air for an instant was freezing cold, and then the mist changed and a tall, bronze-colored man stood in the tent. He was as straight as an arrow, his brow was

high, his firm lips were compressed, and his eyes seemed to look through the people who were before him. He folded his arms with an imperious gesture and gazed at the woman.

"Guatamozin!" said the woman, speaking almost in a whisper.

"I am Guatamozin," said the spirit, speaking in a voice that rang out in the night. "I am Guatamozin—once the Emperor of Tenochtitlan; once your friend; once the man whose love you sought and never gained. Why are you here in your living person? Why are you not dead?"

"It is a sad tale," said the woman; "a sad tale, which I prefer not to tell you. Why are you here? What do you seek from me?"

"Why I am here I know not," said the tall warrior. "I seek nothing from you. I am dead, and dead have been for almost unnumbered years; yet I seem to know but little of what existence I have held since I left the earth. To me the mystery of life has not been explained, and I cannot fathom the mystery of death. Mystery! Mystery! Why, all is mystery! My birth was mysterious, my life was mysterious even to me, and death is even more mysterious."

"Tell me of yourself," said the woman, her

curiosity seeming to master her other emotions.

"You remain as I knew you, a seeker after knowledge," said Guatamozin, smiling. "Well, I cannot tell you of myself, for I know but little of myself. The histories that have been written by the descendants of the white-skinned conquerors tell that I was the nephew of Montezuma, the Emperor; but I was not born a babe to any woman of his kin. I was a man when I came to earth, and in the mountain fastnesses I found a woman and by instinct was led to call her mother. She was of the blood of the Montezumas, but she had lived in exile for many years. Yet when she returned to the royal city and proclaimed that I was her son, she was believed, and the people called me a man of royal blood. The white men learned but little of me; I shot the first arrow at Montezuma the fool, and from that time the people knew me. It was then that you came to me, a white witch with great wisdom, and told me how to conduct battles. Ah, you and I fought battles that were fit to have been the battles fought by gods! If I could have loved you as you desired,—if I could have had love to press me forward to victory,—I would have driven the Spanish

devils into the earth and purged the land of Mexico from their presence forever. But I fought as fights a man who had but little to win, and in time I was beaten. I was a king; a queen should have been born for me, but there was none that I loved. And because I lacked a queen and love I was beaten."

The woman became visibly excited as the spirit talked, and when he stopped she arose and stood before him.

"O Guatamozin," said she, "tell me of the place where now you have your being. Are you still a king and a ruler of men? Does any woman now have your love?"

"I am like one wakened from a long sleep," said the spirit, "and I can tell you nothing. Some things are in my brain, but they seem like the shadows of dreams, and I cannot comprehend them."

The woman tore open the part of her robe that was around her throat, her white neck gleamed like fine ivory in the dim light of the tent, her bosom heaved, and her excitement was so great that scarcely could she speak. The dawning of a great truth was in her mind; but the two men, whose understanding was not so great, looked on in stupid wonder.

"King," said the woman, "tell me if, in the

world where you now abide, you know aught of a man named Lo-To-Kah?—an Indian like yourself."

"Lo-To-Kah!" said the king, in a musing way. "Lo-To-Kah! Why, it seems to me the name is as familiar as my own. Yet I cannot remember."

He raised his hand to his brow and stood in a thoughtful attitude for a little time, seeming like one who strove to remember a familiar thing that had slipped from his mind. Then in an instant,—in a shorter period of time than can be comprehended by a finite mind,—he vanished into thin air and was utterly gone. The woman, who seemed used to strange things, seemed scarcely able to comprehend the sudden disappearance, but sat gazing at the empty place where he had been. The traveller sat still, saying no word; and the eyes of the negro rolled in a paroxysm of excited fear.

The three persons in the tent sat in attitudes of expectancy. No one of them was conscious that he expected anything, yet each believed the white mist and the deadly chill would come again. And it was not long until they came. When the mist faded the traveller sprang to his feet in astonishment, for be-

fore the woman stood a warrior and a chief whose greatness has been heralded to the uttermost ends of the earth; a man with white skin who was mightier than armies with banners; a man before whom kings fell as falls the trees before a mountain storm: one so well known that his likeness is yet familiar in almost all parts of the world. The name of this man was not spoken, and if the traveller who saw him, or the writer who relates this tale, should name him, it would be said that it was not true that he came to earth again and appeared in a tent on the desert plains.

The man, or spirit of a man, gazed upon the woman for a time, his imperious eyes seeming to look into her very soul. She rose and took a step toward him, seeming like a bird that is charmed by a serpent. Then the man spoke. He said: . . . . . .

"Raymeya, why is it that I could not love you when I was a man upon the earth? Why is it that I cannot love you now? You did more for me than all the kings and councillors and generals I ever knew. You came to me always in secret; yet you put the sceptre of power into my hand, and you enabled me to win the crowns of rulers. Why was it that I loved you not?"

"Lo-To-Kah, in barbaric splendor, stood in the room."

The woman did not answer, and after a little time the man went on speaking:

"I possessed all the ambitions that are known to warriors and kings. I possessed all the ambitions but one that are known to men, but that I lacked. You, who more than aught else made me, offered me your love on your bended knees, and I scorned you. Could I have loved you, the world and all its fulness would have been mine and thine: nations of barbarians as well as civilized nations would have bent the knee to us. I lacked nothing but a lover."

The gloomy eyes of the wraith were turned in meditation upon the ground, and just as had happened before, the figure vanished into thin air.

The woman trembled, tears came to her eyes, and she whispered, as though speaking to herself:

"Now must come Lo-To-Kah! He was the last of all the men I loved—the last, the greatest, the best, and the most dearly loved. If he will come to me, and will say one word of love, the curse that crushes me to the earth will be easier to bear."

No sooner had she ceased speaking than the mist and the chill were in the tent again;

and, when the mist vanished, Lo-To-Kah the Indian, dressed in all the barbaric splendor of his people, stood in the room.

"O Lo-To-Kah, loved one! Speak! Tell me you have come to say the thing you never would say in life!" cried the woman, falling upon her knees, and holding her hands in supplication to the spirit.

The spirit was like a young man, although Lo-To-Kah had been old and bent at the time he died. He gazed at the kneeling woman, and said:

"Raymeya, you remain, as I knew you, the fairest woman who ever dwelt upon the earth. You are fairer than the women strong young men see in dreams; you are fairer than the women who dwell in the land that lies beyond the gates of death: but I love you not. You were my friend when I was upon earth; you are now my friend—and that is all."

A look came into the eyes of the woman that seemed to tell of all the sadness ever known to women. She gazed beseechingly and hopelessly into the eyes of the tall Indian; and then, with a sigh that seemed to rend her bosom, she sank upon the ground. Soon she raised her head again and said:

"O Lo-To-Kah, it is with me now as it ever

was. All wealth, all power, and all wisdom that I seek are given to me; but love is not for me. Through all the years of your life,—when you were a strong young man, as you seem now; when you were an old man, wrinkled and with one foot over the brink of the grave,—I loved you. I loved you, but you loved me not. I have loved men before—loved them before you were born; but never loved I a man, never loved a woman a man, as I have loved you. But as I cannot have your love, teach me of the knowledge you know. Tell me of that land that lies beyond the grave, and of the wisdom you have gained there; tell me of the secrets of birth and death —of the life that lies after death, and of the life that was before birth."

The Indian started. "Woman," said he, "speak you of a life before birth? Of what are you thinking?"

"Tell me of that life," said the woman.

"I know not of any life before birth," said the Indian. He seemed to be troubled as he spoke, and his gaze wandered from the woman.

"Tell me!" reiterated the woman.

The Indian gave a great start. He pressed his hand to his eyes as a man might do who

had received a blow; and then, seeming the while to peer away into nothingness, he said:

"O Raymeya, witch of all human knowledge, what is this spell you have caused to be cast over me? I know that I have died. I have remembrance of the things that have befallen me since my body was placed in the ground to return to the earth from which it came; but until now I had no greater knowledge. But now,—now,—the past seems to roll open to my gaze as the leaves of a scroll open to the gaze of a student. I see the forgotten years and centuries as a man might see who looks down a mighty corridor and through mighty doors. Ah! The first door opens, and I see—I see,—O witch! this cannot be true! You are casting a spell upon me! This thing cannot, must not, be true!"

Beads of perspiration stood out on the white skin of the woman. She gazed at the spirit Indian as though she were gazing into the very womb of all Infinity, and her breath came in gasps like unto the gasps of one who is dying. The negro and the traveller were rigid and mute with fear and wonder; and the wraith, like a living, breathing man, stood in the centre of the tent, gazing away into vacancy with distended eyes.

"What of the gate you see?" asked the woman, speaking in so low a whisper that her voice was barely audible.

"I see a man," said the Indian—"a man whose name struck terror to the hearts of millions; a man who was so great that scarce could the earth contain the ambitions of his limitless mind. He was a warrior, a statesman, an emperor. And with him I see you. You are kneeling at his side, pointing out the way to even greater fame, and asking him to give to you his love. Raymeya, that man was—" here he spoke a name, "and,—why, wonder of all wonders! that man was also I! I, in another form, with another color, but it was I."

The truth that had been made known to Lo-To-Kah was so great,—so stupendously and unreasonably great,—that he stood gaping like the veriest fool. The woman rose to her full height; her loose robe slipped from her bust, causing her to seem like a living statue of the finest marble; but she was more self-possessed than the wraith, and she said:

"Look farther! Never, in unnumbered centuries, may so much of the pure truth of existence be made known to you. Miss not this opportunity. Look once again!"

Then the Indian said: "I see farther yet down the avenue of the dead centuries, and I see a land of red-skinned men—men who are half wild and half as wise as any men who have lived. I see a vast concourse of people, who seem in great trouble: their homes, their kingdom, their religion, their very belief in all things, are attacked and are being taken from them; and I see a young man with a stern brow and gloomy eyes, who goes among them, and as he walks among them they fall down and kiss the hem of his robe. The man is a warrior and a king, and his name,—I seem to hear the multitude shouting it,—his name is Guatamozin! And—oh, again the infinite wonder! Guatamozin I am! I it was who was Guatamozin the warrior. And by my side —as I lived then,—I see you, the fairest and wisest of all earthly women; and you guide me to victory, you instruct me in warfare, and you seek my love, which I cannot give you. Oh, the marvellous wonder of all this!"

"Speak on!" said the woman who had been called witch; "speak on! For never, in countless æons of ages, may such knowledge be given to you or to me again."

"Guatamozin and his land have faded from

my vision," said the wraith; "but in their stead I see another fair land—a land of sunshine and flowers, of bright mountains and clear streams. The land is Spain, and there I see a man and a woman. The man is named Ransoval, and the woman is yourself. You love him, and he loves you more than ever woman was loved. I seem to see—O witch, let me cease! Let me go, for I fear to learn more of this terrible truth."

"Speak on," said the woman, with lips as ashen as the lips of the dead; "speak on! Were you Ransoval?"

"I—I was Ransoval," said the Indian speaking in a voice of awe. "I was Ransoval, and you were my bride, my other self—the best part of all the world to me. You it was who should have been my queen when I half conquered the world; you it was who should have reigned with me, and won with me, in the valley of lost Anahuac; you it was who should have been my bride when I was a wild Indian in the forest. No, it was Zeetah, the Indian maiden, who was my bride then! O witch, queen,—let us cease from our quest of this horrible knowledge."

The witch had risen and was standing so

close to the wraith that she could look into its very eyes.

"Speak on," she said.

She was like a beautiful vision. Her white bosom gleamed in the dim light, her eyes sparkled like twin stars, and her long black hair had become unbound and fell in great profusion over her shoulders.

"I see,—yea, I see much of my life when I was Ransoval the soldier of fortune. But of that I will speak no farther, for there is in that life a mystery that I cannot understand when I remember the life I lived as a chief in the forest. How could I have loved you so then, when I so love Zeetah now? But I see beyond that life; I see a life that was lived in a great land of the east—in a land beloved of the sun; a land of wealth and wisdom. And in that land I see you, and you are—no! I will not speak the name you were then known by to men."

The Indian bent his gaze upon the woman, who stood, clothed in her unearthly beauty, before him.

"O woman, witch, queen, empress!" he said. "In years that have not long been gone I regarded you as the wisest and greatest woman upon the earth; but you were as

naught to what you were in that old time when the world was young, and you ruled next to Heaven itself. And in that time I was the one man on the face of the earth who had your love. Your kisses and your embraces were sometimes bestowed upon others; but, in your heart, I ruled alone."

"In that life was I——"

"Stop!" said the Indian. "Who you were I will not tell you. You are already so wise that you are the most miserable person who lives in all the world. I will tell you no more."

"Will you not tell me what I might have been if I had not killed you when you were Ransoval?"

"I will tell you, because of the great love I once bore for you. Listen: If you had not killed me, you and I would have been born upon the earth again as Guatamozin, and his queen, and we would have saved the Aztec Empire, and made it one of the wonders of the world; then we would have died and in time been born again as—as a great ruler and his empress. We would have conquered the world and all of its many lands and peoples, and we would have ruled the world in love and charity and wisdom. I ruled part of the world, but I ruled with an iron hand, and in

wickedness and bitterness of heart, which was because I yearned for a beloved queen, and had only unloved ones."

"When the curse was put upon me," said the woman, "it was said that I should live until you had been freed from Purgatory. Have you not been so freed for many years?"

"He who dwells upon the earth dwells in Purgatory," said the wraith, sententiously.

"What will the future bring forth for you and me?" asked the witch. As she spoke she trembled like one with palsy.

"Of the future I know not," said the Indian. "Yet stop! The future is unrolling to my gaze as the past has done. I see the time that I shall continue to live in the land of spirits, happy in the quiet love of Zeetah, my wife. Then there shall come a time, many centuries from now, when the sons of men will become altogether tainted with corruption, and they will lie and do evil all the days of their lives. Then I shall die from the life I now live, and Zeetah shall die, and we shall both be born again. And we will conquer the world, and Zeetah will be my queen—as you would have been but for yourself; and we will redeem the world to honor and truth. And for you, I see—I see——"